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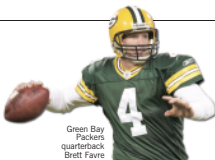
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Actor Alan Cumming



39th BCT hands over command at Camp Taji

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Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre

Back to the Pack: Favre will return in 2005

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SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2005

The death that took down an insurgency

How one determined 3rd ID commander's response to a GI's death in Iraq brought a terror cell to its knees

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PETER PHOTINO/Stars and Stripes

PHOTO BY STEVE HEBERT/Polaris

Iraqi Army soldiers salute during the playing of taps as fallen Cpl. Jacob Palmatier's fellow Battle Boars of the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment remember their fallen comrade during a Feb. 27 memorial at Forward Operating Base Normandy near Musqadiyah, Iraq. Palmatier, who was killed by a roadside attack, was the first soldier from 1-30 Infantry to die during this rotation to Iraq. His death — and the Battle Boars' subsequent hunt for his killers — led to the capture of several wanted terrorists.

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States

Terror-funding case: A three-year case that saw the government's star witness set himself on fire outside the White House ended with the convictions of a Yemeni sheik and his assistant on terror-funding charges.

After the verdict was announced Thursday, Sheik Mohammed Ali Hassan al-Moayad and his assistant, Mohammed Yahya Zayed, cried out in Arabic that they had been wrongly convicted because jurors had not seen all of the government's surveillance tapes.

Al-Moayad and Zayed were convicted of all but two of the 10 charges in an indictment that accused them of vital roles in a terror funding network that stretched from Brooklyn to Yemen.

Human trafficking trial: With the temperature inside a tractor-trailer full of illegal immigrants climbing higher and higher, Doris Argueta told jurors she prayed for her life.

"I asked God, 'Please I want to live.' I did not want to leave my children alone," Argueta, 33, took the stand Thursday in the Houston trial of Tyrone Williams to describe what it was like to be trapped in a virtual oven — the temperature, authorities say, reached 173 degrees — and survive.

Williams is accused of driving and abandoning the big rig and could face the death penalty if convicted for his role in the deaths of 19 of the immigrants in the May 2003 smuggling attempt.

Judge's relatives killed: A DNA match from a cigarette butt convinced police that a Chicago electrician was the killer of a federal judge's husband and mother, authorities said. The cigarette butt found in Judge John Humphrey Lefkowitz's house was matched to the electrician, Bart Reiter, who killed himself during a traffic stop in Wisconsin this week, and the evidence points to him as the lone killer, a police spokesman said.

Red Sox death: Federal officials want the manufacturer of a pepper-pellet gun used by Boston police when a college student was killed during Red Sox celebrations last fall to respond to Israeli police questions about the weapon's accuracy.

Tests by Israeli police on the FN303 weapon, which fires pepper projectiles, concluded that its accuracy "decreased significantly" after 300 rounds were fired, according to a March 2 letter from Sarah V. Hart, director of the National Institute of Justice, to the weapon's manufacturer, FN Herstal USA.

Boston police fired the weapon into a crowd outside Fenway Park celebrating the Red Sox win over the New York Yankees in the AL Championship Series on Oct. 21.

Victoria Snelgrove, 21, an Emerson College student from East Bridgewater, was hit in the head and subsequently died.

Thomas Drechsler, a lawyer who represents Officer Rocheford Menen, whom police have identified as the officer who fired the shot that hit Snelgrove, seized on the letter as proof that his client is not to blame, but the weapon is.

Millien has always maintained that he was not aiming at Snelgrove, but at someone near her who was throwing bottles, Drechsler said.

Klansman accident: Edgar Ray Killen, the reputed Klansman accused of killing three civil rights workers in 1964, was reported in good condition Friday after breaking both his legs in a logging accident.

A tree fell on the 80-year-old Killen while



Slain Mounties: Thousands of Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers follow four Mounties as they march for four officers Peter Schlemann, 25; Leo Johnston, 32; Anthony Gordon, 28; and Brock Myrol, 29, all killed in the line of duty last week in Edmonton, Canada.

he was cutting timber Thursday, knocking him out and shattering the bones in both of his thighs, his attorney, Mitch Moran, told The Associated Press.

Killen, indicted by a Neshoba County grand jury in February on three counts of murder, is accused of orchestrating the killings of James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman. A 1967 federal trial revealed that the killings were part of a Ku Klux Klan conspiracy.

He had been scheduled to stand trial April 18 in Jackson, Miss.

California wildfire: A lost hunter who set a signal fire that grew into the biggest wildfire in California history pleaded guilty Thursday in a deal with federal prosecutors that could put him behind bars for up to five years.

Sergio Martinez pleaded guilty to one count of starting the October 2003 Cedar fire. Driven by hot, dry winds, the fire killed 15 people and destroyed more than 2,000 homes in San Diego County.

GOP leader sentenced: The former executive director of the state Republican Party was sentenced Thursday to seven months in prison for jamming Democratic telephone lines during the 2002 general election.

Chuck McGee pleaded guilty to conspiring to make anonymous calls to army or barracks. He also was fined \$2,000 and ordered to perform 200 hours of community service. He faced up to 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

World

France pedophilia trial: After a day of shocking testimony, a massive pedophilia trial in France moved ahead Friday with the questioning of more lead suspects in the case.

Those to be heard included a woman accused of raping, sexually abusing, corrupting and prostituting children. She risks 20 years imprisonment. Under French law, she can only be identified as Patricia M. to preserve the anonymity of her alleged victims.

Her husband and father-in-law, both

charged with rape and sexual abuse of children, testified Thursday. The father-in-law coldly admitted that he "didn't give a damn" about his own children. His daughter told the court that he had raped her when she was young.

In all, 66 people are accused of involvement in the rape, sexual abuse and prostitution of children in Angers, 165 miles southwest of Paris.

War crimes tribunal: The war crimes charges against Kosovo's former Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj are nothing but "in-nuendo and lies" based on Serbian allegations, his lawyer said Friday.

Haradinaj surrendered to the U.N. war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia this week after being indicted on 37 counts of war crimes.

"A close study of the indictment shows that it is nothing more than a collection of allegations taken directly from Serbian files," said Michael O'Reilly, the coordinator of Haradinaj's legal council team.

Ethiopian flash point: U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called on Ethiopia to pull its troops back from the border with neighboring Eritrea, saying the military build up there is a source of regional instability.

The two nations are deadlocked over the decision of an international boundary commission to award the town of Badme to Eritrea. The town was the flash point for their 1998-2000 war which cost each nation an estimated \$1 billion that left some 70,000 people dead.

Concorde crash investigation: A French magistrate formally placed Continental Airlines under investigation for the suspected role played by one of the U.S. carrier's jets in the crash of the supersonic Concorde in July 2000 that killed 113 people.

Two probes by experts — including one by the prosecutors' office — pointed to a titanium strip from a Continental jet as the source of the disaster.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

Correction

In a brief on Page 2 of Friday's editions, The Associated Press misstated the expense of the Flight 93 memorial. A study said that \$30 million is a realistic fundraising goal for the project, but additional state and federal funds will be needed.

Comics, horoscopes
and advice every day
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Relatives bury dozens of victims of suicide attack

BY SINDBAD AHMED
The Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq — Angry, weeping relatives on Friday buried dozens of people killed a day earlier in a suicide attack at separate funerals in this northern Iraqi city as plans for a mass funeral procession were canceled because of fears it would be attacked.

The bloodshed came as Shiite and Kurdish politicians in Baghdad said they overcame a major stumbling block to forming a new coalition government.

The two groups agreed on the makeup of the three-member Presidency Council, which would include Jalal Talabani as Iraq's first Kurdish president and a Sunni and Shiite Arab for the two vice president posts, said Ali al-Dabagh of the Shiite clergy-backed United Iraqi Alliance.

Names were not announced for those jobs and al-Dabagh said differences remain over the future deployment of non-Kurdish Iraqi army units in Kurdistan, officials said.

Hundreds of men, women and children crowded the main hospital in Mosul, trying to find and identify the 50 dead and more than 100 wounded in Thursday's blast at a funeral tent jammed with Shiite mourners.

The army raised the death toll from 47 to "at least 50" in an announcement in Baghdad. At least 10 of the seriously injured had been taken to one of its military hospitals.

"I cannot describe the amount of despair I feel," said Shereh Qasim Mohammed Ali. "I lost

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Thursday, March 10, 2005, at least 1,512 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,151 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is six higher than the Defense Department's tally last updated at 10 a.m. EST Thursday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, eight; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Latvia one death each.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

- No deaths reported.
- The latest identifications reported by the military:
- No identifications reported.

seven of my sons, brothers and cousins. I want to know who carried out this attack."

Shiite mosques and funerals have become a frequent target of Sunni-led insurgents. Last month, suicide bombers attacked a number of them during the Shiite commemoration of Ashura, killing nearly 100 people.



Asmaa Hani holds a photo of her dead father, Hani Abdul-Karim, as she stands with her mother, left, in the northern town of Mosul in Iraq on Friday. Asmaa's father was one of 50 people killed when a suicide bomber blew himself up Thursday.

Mosul has been a hotbed of guerrilla activity, and the scene of many bombings, drive-by shootings and assassinations targeting the country's security services, majority Shiites and people thought to be working with U.S.-led forces.

At Baghdad's Um al-Qura mosque, a Sunni Muslim cleric denounced bombings, but blamed Iraq and U.S. authorities for failing to provide security.

Family members and politicians agreed no joint funeral would be held Saturday in Mosul because of the "fear of another attack like this one," said Hamid

Zain al-Ali, a member of the Bad' Movement of firebrand Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, whose militants rose up against U.S. troops several times in 2004.

Dealing with the persistent insurgency will be a main task for a new Iraqi government.

Officials said the deal between the Shiite cleric-backed United Iraqi Alliance and the Kurdish parties opens the way for naming a Cabinet when Iraq's democratically elected National Assembly convenes Wednesday.

"We are almost finished with the basic matters and we will meet again to finalize things before Monday," al-Dabagh said.

Group asks for count of Iraqi dead

The Associated Press

LONDON — A group of public health experts sharply criticized Britain and America on Friday for failing to count the number of Iraqis who have died as a result of the war in Iraq.

The group said the United States and Britain rely on the Iraqi Ministry of Health tally and that number was "likely seriously to underestimate" deaths.

It urged officials of the two countries to immediately commission "a comprehensive, independent inquiry into Iraq war-related casualties."

The Iraqi Health Ministry has estimated that 3,853 civilians were killed and 15,517 injured between April and October 2004.

Britain's Foreign Office said it agreed with the writers about "the importance of Iraqi lives" but believed the security threats in Iraq make a more thorough survey unfeasible. The British government says it believes the Iraqi Health Ministry figures are the most accurate available.

The public health experts, writing in a statement being published by the British Medical Journal, said the number was unreliable because it did not include deaths in the first year after the U.S.-led invasion and did not take into account nonviolent deaths caused indirectly by the war or those not reported to the health care system.

The Lancet medical journal estimated in October that 98,000 more civilians had been killed in the first year after the hostilities in March 2003 than would otherwise have been expected to die.

"The inadequacy of the current U.S./U.K. policy was highlighted" by the Lancet study, which scientists conducted by surveying a sampling of Iraqi households and comparing death rates before the war to those in the months following the invasion.

U.S. forces partially informed of Italian's rescue, reports say

BY ALESSANDRA RIZZO
The Associated Press

ROME — U.S. forces in Iraq were only partially informed about last week's Italian intelligence mission to release a hostage, which ended with a shooting on the road to Baghdad airport and the death of secret service agent Nicola Calipari, Italian newspapers said Friday.

While U.S. authorities were informed of the presence of Calipari and a colleague, they did not know that the mission was aimed at freeing journalist Giuliana Sgrena, Italian dailies La Repubblica and Corriere della Sera reported. Sgrena had been kidnapped in Baghdad on Feb. 4.

Calipari's killing by American forces on March 4 shocked Italy and prompted Premier Silvio Berlusconi and other top officials to demand a full explanation from Washington.

A candlelit march is to be held later Friday at Rome's Capitoline Hill in memory of Calipari.

Both newspapers cited a report by Maj. Gen. Mario Maroli, an Italian who is the coalition forces'

second-in-command. The report has been given to Rome prosecutors investigating the killing.

According to the newspapers, Maroli informed U.S. officials that Calipari and the other Italian officer were there, but not that the mission was aimed at releasing Sgrena. The lack of full information was possibly due to known U.S. opposition to Italy's policy of negotiating with kidnappers, Italian media have suggested.

However, the papers had conflicting versions over how much Maroli knew. Corriere said he knew that Calipari was working to have the hostage released, La Repubblica said he didn't.

Calipari was killed when U.S. troops opened fire on a vehicle carrying him, the other intelligence officer and Sgrena, who had just been released after being held hostage for a month. Sgrena and the other man were both injured.

Italy — which is one of the largest contributors to the U.S.-led coalition with 5,000 troops in Iraq — has said the shooting was an "accident," but has also disputed some elements of the account given by the Americans.

Bulgarian official defends Iraq mission

SOFIA, Bulgaria — A senior government official said Friday that Bulgarian troops should remain in Iraq until the end of their mandate, despite widespread popular opposition.

"A pullout of the Bulgarian troops from Iraq ahead of the general elections here this summer would be a wrong move," Deputy Foreign Minister Gergana Grancharova said in a television interview.

The liberal government of Prime Minister Simeon Sakskoburgotski is to decide by the end of the month whether to keep troops in Iraq beyond July. Parliament will then take the final decision.

An opinion poll published Friday said 60.9 percent of Bulgarians want an immediate troop withdrawal. The Media Links survey of 500 adults was taken March 8-10 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

Iraqi forces dying at twice the rate of U.S. soldiers

WASHINGTON — Iraqi security forces are dying at twice the rate of U.S. soldiers in the country, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told a congressional panel Thursday.

Gen. Richard Myers told the House Armed Services Committee that has held true since last July 1.

"They've lost a lot of lives," agreed Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who appeared with Myers.

Though Myers didn't provide a figure, his statement would mean at least 1,000 Iraqi soldiers and police have been killed in the ongoing war with the insurgency since last July 1. During the same period, about 518 U.S. soldiers have been killed in combat, while about 140 more have died in accidents or otherwise outside of combat.

From The Associated Press

39th Brigade passes torch at Camp Taji

Progress visible from 11-month deployment

BY VINCE LITTLE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Army Staff Sgt. Jeffery Bergan still recalls his welcome to Baghdad last April while traveling north from Kuwait.

"When we first came into the city, our convoy got ambushed," he said. "It was all peaceful through southern Iraq. Then, in Baghdad, we got engaged right away. They told us it would happen, but that first live round is still a shock to the system."

Nearly a year later, the 31-year-old from Beebe, Ark., a battle noncommissioned officer for the 39th Brigade Combat Team's tactical operations center, says things have calmed down dramatically. Rocket and mortar attacks on Taji have dropped, and even the convoys coming up from Kuwait now encounter few problems.

So perhaps it was fitting that 39th Brigade officials quietly handed authority to the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division in a low-profile ceremony Wednesday. The operational area extends about 20 kilometers north of Taji and south into Baghdad, down to Sadr City and east of the Tigris River.

The brigade, with almost 3,700 soldiers in Iraq, began pulling out Sunday for Kuwait on the long road back to Little Rock, Ark. It has units in 47 towns throughout Arkansas and nine other states. Counting a five-month training stint prior to the deployment, most troops will wind up being away from home for about 18 months.

Before the unit took command here, five of its soldiers died in separate mortar attacks on Taji, while another was killed in an ambush west of the camp. One lost a leg on a bridge during those initial convoy attacks entering Baghdad.

Brig. Gen. Ronald S. Chastain, the 39th Brigade Combat Team commander, declined to say how many casualties the unit suffered after gaining authority, but lauded the performance and sacrifices made by his soldiers.

"When you lose four people from one company in a rocket attack, that's pretty devastating," he said. "Our soldiers have been through a lot."

Roadside bombs posed the greatest danger to 39th Brigade soldiers, he added, causing multiple casualties. In one incident, three soldiers were killed by a blast while responding to wounded personnel from another attack.

In late January, a huge explosion ripped open the bottom of an M1 tank. The brigade also lost a few Bradley fighting vehicles to the roadside devices.

When the 39th Brigade arrived, installation security was tenuous, Chastain said. Soldiers immediately started placing sandbags and concrete around living areas and office buildings.

Chastain said he regrets that brigade soldiers never managed to develop stronger ties with Iraqis living north of Taji, an area that was very dependent on the Saddam Hussein regime. Many worked on the facility, which had been an Iraqi air base before the war.

"We did not maintain continuity with those people in the northern area," Chastain said. "Success with the Iraqi people is based on building personal relationships. We were not able to do that in the northern area."

Two Iraqi National Guard battalions and a security company were assigned training and equipment from the 39th Brigade, he said, which led to the successful elections Jan. 30.

Within the sector during the past year, two massive Shiite marches to the Khadamiyah Shrine were staged through Sunni regions. They were accompanied by very little violence, and Chastain credits the brigade's work with Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi Police officials.



Capt. Kevin Eestep, 35, of Springdale, Ark., medical officer for 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery Regiment, 39th Brigade Combat Team, packs his last locker at Camp Taji, Iraq. About 3,700 soldiers with the 39th Brigade Combat Team began heading home this week. The unit's authority was transferred Wednesday to the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.

VINCE LITTLE/Stars and Stripes

"When you lose four people from one company in a rocket attack, that's pretty devastating. Our soldiers have been through a lot."

Brig. Gen. Ronald S. Chastain
39th Brigade Combat Team commander

Bergan said he had very little faith in Iraqi security forces when he first arrived, but that's changed.

"I didn't know if I really wanted to go out with these guys," he added. "We trained extensively with them. Now, I'm pretty confident they can perform. They put out a show of force that has made security a lot better."

The 39th Brigade Combat Team also featured the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Task Force — its lone active-duty element — a Macedonian special-forces platoon and Army Reserve detachments.

"It certainly wasn't a pure National Guard unit," Chastain said. "Our soldiers have done awfully well. They really have."

Bergan hopes that'll help shed some negative perceptions about National Guard members.

"They say we're the ones who never engage, never deploy. The National Guard always stays back," he said. "I believe we actually proved ourselves."

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1st AD brigade finds scene has changed since 1st tour

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — The 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division is now responsible for a chunk of Baghdad that's been transformed politically since the unit began its first rotation in Iraq two years ago, the unit's top military official said.

The Fort Riley, Kan.-based division, with 3,500 soldiers, arrived in mid-February.

It officially took charge Wednesday of a sector that runs from the inner-city to the more rural, agricultural areas in the northern outskirts.

About 60 percent of the brigade also took part in the initial phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom, with many closing that first tour at Taji, according to Army Col. David Bishop, the brigade's commander.

"They've got a lot of continuity and understanding that most new units don't have here," he said Wednesday. "Our [area of operation] is large and diverse... [so] we've got to have a diverse approach to how we deal with people and the situation here."

Since the division's last tour in Iraq, political power was transferred to the new Iraqi government and the nation's first free election took place. Two more elections are scheduled this year as Iraqi ministries continue to take control of their respective areas.

"Coalition forces are working more in a supportive role with the Iraqi government than we were last time," Bishop said.

"We want to continue fighting the insurgency, but at the same time, we have to train, mentor and coach the Iraqi security forces to the point where they can conduct security missions on their own for the Iraqi people."

"It's a very doable challenge. Every day, I see Iraqis taking over more missions that used to be handled solely by U.S. forces."

Bishop points to Baghdad, where the Iraqi 40th Brigade is in control of a critical sector.

At Taji, the 307th Iraqi Army Battalion has its own area and works closely with the U.S. military. When its training is complete, he said, the unit will be assigned a zone by the Iraqi brigade.

The Iraqi Army has displayed a great passion to take over additional responsibilities and tasks from coalition forces, Bishop said.

"There are a lot of good leaders, soldiers with promise," he added. "There's a genuine desire by the Iraqi Army to get insurgents off the streets. There are reports that the Iraqi people are getting tired of insurgents, too, and they've started turning them in to coalition and Iraqi forces."

During the next year, Bishop hopes to continue rooting out terrorists and training Iraqi forces so they can pick up more of that battle — all while protecting his own soldiers and returning them safely to the United States.

— Vince Little

Critics say Abu Ghraib probe a 'whitewash'

Human rights groups, military watchdogs call for a new independent investigation

BY JON R. ANDERSON

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Human rights groups and military watchdogs are labeling a recently released investigation into Abu Ghraib a whitewash and are joining calls by some top Congressional leaders for a new independent investigation.

The criticism comes in the wake of a nearly 400-page report authored by Vice Adm. Albert T. Church, who concluded that top-level policy makers could not be blamed for some 70 confirmed cases of abuse in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

"Even in the absence of a precise definition of 'humane treatment,' it is clear that none of the pictured abuses at Abu Ghraib bear any resemblance to approved policies at any level, in any theatre," Church concluded in his report exonerating Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and other Pentagon brass of accusations that they either encouraged or turned a blind eye to abuses.

Church was ordered by Rumsfeld to review existing investigations and explore any gaps that remain uncovered.

Briefing reporters Thursday afternoon, Church defended his report and stood by his decision not to interview Rumsfeld or Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Richard Myers as part of his investigation. He could have interviewed them, he made clear, but said he didn't have any questions for them.

But some top Congressional leaders say the investigation was not thorough enough.

"The Defense Department is not able to assess accountability at senior levels, particularly when investigators are in the

chain of command of the officials whose policies and actions they are investigating," charged Sen. Carl Levin, the ranking democrat on Senate Armed Services Committee, as Church was reporting his findings Thursday.

"Only an independent review can fully and objectively assess both the institutional and personal accountability for the abuse of detainees," Levin said.

A slew of human rights groups agree.

"This was the mother of all whitewashes," said Tom Malinowski, director of Human Rights Watch in Washington, D.C.

"Of all the internal reports that the Pentagon has produced, this is by far the weakest and most clearly geared towards exoneration of senior officials, rather than finding the truth," Malinowski said.

Questions remain

Even as Church was briefing senators Thursday, the American Civil Liberties Union was raising the question of leadership accountability by releasing 800 pages of documents obtained from the Army under the Freedom of Information Act.

Among the documents is a report the group claims proves "a formal agreement between the Army and the CIA to hide 'ghost detainees' and an atmosphere of 'teleseaphobia' that prevented innocent detainees from being freed," the ACLU said in a statement.

"It seems the military can only look down the chain of command, not up, when it comes to holding people accountable," ACLU Executive Director Anthony D. Romero said in the statement.

"An outside special counsel is



Vice Adm. Albert Church appears before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Capitol Hill Thursday, to discuss his review of Department of Defense prisoner detention operations and interrogation techniques.

the only way to ensure that all civilians who violated, or conspired to violate, the laws are held responsible for their crimes."

Church said he was permitted by Rumsfeld to fill in the gaps, but critics say he failed to do that.

"There are still too many questions that haven't been answered," said Winslow Wheeler, a senior fellow for the Center for Defense Information, an independent Pentagon watchdog group, who spent more than 30 years as an investigator for the Government Accounting Office and as a congressional aide.

"DOD reports on this don't cut it," Wheeler said. "It's like asking O.J. Simpson if he killed his wife. There needs to be independent inquiry that is not under chain of command, but unfortunately to Congress's undying shame — we still do not have the full story on all this."

"Our concern is that there have been several investigations, but none of them so far have properly scrutinized senior officials," said Alistair Hodgget, a spokesman for Amnesty International. The question remains, he said, "What did senior officials in the Pentagon order and what responsibility do the bear?"

Meanwhile, activists point out only junior troops have faced courts-martial even while field commanders implicated in abuse by previous investigations remain unchanged — and in some cases still in command.

Col. Thomas Pappas, for example, remains commander of the Darmstadt, Germany-based 205th Military Intelligence Brigade and Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez is preparing V Corps to return to Iraq in less than a year.

"Unfortunately, it does appear that the higher up you are, the

less likely you are to be punished — and in fact may even be rewarded," Hodgget said.

Despite the calls for an independent review, a Pentagon spokesman said it was not being considered.

Meanwhile, Church dismissed criticism leveled at his report.

"I don't believe anybody can call this a whitewash. The facts are what the facts are. I was an independent investigator, an IG. I took that very seriously," said Church, adding "had the facts and the documentation led me to a different conclusion I would have made that conclusion."

Asked if he was surprised, a year after abuses first surfaced, no field commanders or senior officers had faced court martial charges yet, Church said criminal investigations were still under way.

E-mail Jon R. Anderson at: Jon.Anderson@stripes.osd.mil

Recent investigations into allegations of prisoner abuse

Released investigations

■ **Taguba Report** — An internal Army "15-6 investigation" ordered by Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez on Jan. 31, 2001, and completed May 11, 2004. Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba accused soldiers in the 800th Military Police Brigade at Abu Ghraib of "sadistic, blatant and wanton criminal abuses." Responding to a senator's question about how such actions were possible, he responded:

"Failure in leadership, sir, from the brigade commander on down. Lack of discipline, no training whatsoever and no supervision. Supervisory omission was rampant."

■ **Mikolashek Investigation** — Army Inspector General Lt. Gen. Paul Mikolashek

was ordered to look into training and prison operations throughout U.S. Central Command in February 2004. He issued his report in July, finding 94 confirmed cases of abuse, but no evidence of leadership failure.

■ **Jones-Fay Report** — In another 15-6 (informal) investigation, Lt. Gen. Anthony Jones and Maj. Gen. George Fay were ordered in April 2004 to look into alleged misconduct by members of the 205th MI Brigade and operations at Abu Ghraib. Their findings, released in August, accused the 205th's commander Col. Thomas Pappas and commander of the 800th MP Brigade of wrongdoing. Their investigation also said Sanchez and his deputy Maj. Gen. Walter Wujdakowski failed to provide proper oversight at Abu Ghraib and the units there.

■ **Schlesinger Report** — An independent panel led by former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger commissioned by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in May. Findings released in August largely corroborated the Jones-Fay report.

"Commanding officers and their staffs at various levels failed in their duties and that such failure contributed directly or indirectly to detainee abuse," reads the report, singling out Sanchez, Wujdakowski, Karpinski, Pappas and Jordan, among others.

■ **Church Report** — Tasked by Rumsfeld in May, Navy Inspector Gen. Vice Adm. Albert Church was ordered to provide the broadest look at the scandal so far, assessing previous investigations and while delving into gaps not covered by them.

Still pending:

■ **Army IG** — The Army Inspector General's office, overseen by the Defense Department IG, is looking into specific accusations of misconduct by senior officers. Most of those investigations are wrapping up with the results of some now being briefed to members of Congress.

■ **Formica Report** — Brig. Gen. Richard Formica has been tasked with looking at Special Operations units and their role in possible detainee abuse.

■ **Jacoby Report** — Launched in May 2004, Brig. Gen. Charles Jacoby was ordered to look into detainee operations in Afghanistan.

— Jon R. Anderson

Senator: Prewar intel inquiry nearly done

BY KATHERINE SHRADER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress' investigation into prewar intelligence on Iraq is all but over, Senate Intelligence Chairman Pat Roberts signaled Thursday.

An aide to the Kansas Republican later said his comments were only meant as his personal views of the investigative challenges ahead.

The Senate Intelligence Committee produced a 511-page report last summer on flaws of the Iraq intelligence estimate assembled by the country's top analysts in October 2002, and promised a second phase would look at issues that couldn't be finalized in the first year of work.

Following a speech Thursday at the Woo-

drow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Roberts was asked whether the inquiry's second phase would be taken up this spring. He listed three main parts of the investigation and dismissed the merits of each:

■ On whether the administration overstated Iraq intelligence in public remarks, Roberts said his committee could ask why officials made such strong, declarative statements about Iraq's weapons, but they would reply that their statements were based on "bun intelligence."

"To go through that exercise, it seems to me, in a postelection environment, we didn't see how we could do that and achieve any possible progress," he said. "I think whatever pretty well they get it."

■ On whether the estimates regarding

the postwar situation in Iraq were accurate, Roberts said the intelligence was "all over the lot." For instance, he said a predicted humanitarian crisis from a wave of refugees proved wrong.

He said other issues before the committee take precedent over further study of Iraq intelligence, including the new national intelligence director, intelligence reform and "pre-emptive oversight" on North Korea, Iran and other areas.

■ On whether the Office of Special Plans — an intelligence office reporting to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld — operated appropriately, Roberts said there was no evidence the office had a significant impact on the national intelligence estimate of October 2002, a document the administration relied on to help make the case for the invasion.

"I do think the secretary of defense is entitled to have the best intelligence that he deems possible, so we sort of came to a crossroads and that is basically on the back burner," he said.

Later in the day, Roberts' spokeswoman Sarah Little said the committee is still looking into issues saved for the inquiry's second phase. Roberts' comments were "his personal view of the difficulties that the committee staff faces in engaging in phase two. He has ordered staff to follow every lead," Little said.

A congressional aide, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the committee has not yet determined whether there will be a report on the second phase. Some hold the view that the March 12 information uncovered hasn't caused significant concern, the aide said.

Democrats are expecting a report.



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Michelle Naylor, on her third tour in Afghanistan, speaks to women Thursday during a series of discussions on women's rights.

Soldier speaks out for Afghan women's rights

BY KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

NASAGH GULBAR, Afghanistan — It took about 150 years for women to get the right to vote in the United States, and decades longer to achieve equal rights under the law. So in some respects, women are off to a solid start in a democratic Afghanistan.

About 150 women gathered Thursday at Alhironi University to hear a series of speakers tout women's rights in a country where — especially under the Taliban — females have long been considered second-class citizens.

"As women, we want to have equal rights when it comes to this society," said Shirin Shahar, one of the event's organizers.

Parveen Kohistani, director of women's affairs for the province of Kapisa, said the U.S.-led invasion that drove the Taliban from power provided a big boost for women.

"It has improved a lot in the last three years," she said through a translator.

Another translator was needed for one of the event's keynote speakers: Sgt. Michelle Naylor.

The New York native is serving her third tour in Afghanistan. She grew up a short distance from Seneca Falls, a key spot in the women's suffrage movement in the 1920s.

The Afghan women, as Naylor pointed out, made up about 40 percent of those casting votes in the

country's first presidential elections last year. She told the audience that she hoped an even higher percentage would turn out in the parliamentary elections, scheduled for sometime this year.

Naylor said she's not used to speaking in front of so many people, but she said this issue is an important one. She brushed off any pressure about being a role model — dressed in desert camouflage — for hundreds of women.

"Every female who goes outside the wire here is a role model," she said.

In her speech, Naylor touched on a few of the events in the women's suffrage movement in the United States. Then she told her audience that they can expect moral support, but not as much help as they might like from the United States and its allies.

"Every woman in every country has struggled to gain their rights," she said. "Gaining your rights is something you need to do for yourselves."

After the speakers were finished, Naylor and a handful of civil affairs soldiers handed out hundreds of new dresses the military had purchased from local tailors. There were also dozens of toys for the kids who came along with them.

The soldiers then ate lunch with their hosts before taking the bumpy road back to Bagram Air Base, leaving the Afghan women to face a path with more than a few rough stretches of its own.

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Re-examining wisdom of light, fast fighting force

BY MARK MAZZETTI

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Something happened on the way to the wars of the future: The Pentagon became bogged down in old-fashioned, costly, and drawn out war of occupation.

The war in Iraq is forcing top Pentagon planners to rethink several key assumptions about the use of military power and has called into question the vision set out nearly four years ago that the armed forces can win wars and keep the peace with small numbers of fast-moving, lightly-armed troops.

As the Pentagon begins a comprehensive review that will map the future of America's armed forces, many Defense officials are acknowledging that an intricate Iraqi insurgency they didn't foresee has undermined the current military strategy.

While the rapid assault on Baghdad in March 2003 went smoothly enough, it is the bloody two years since that have diverged from the Pentagon's blueprint.

"When people were thinking about regime change, they really weren't thinking about the long term stabilization and peacekeeping operations," said Andrew Hoenig, who led the Pentagon's last major review in 2001 and now is a fellow at the RAND Corp.

As the Pentagon begins its new assessment, it has 145,000 U.S. troops stationed in a country they were supposed to have left months ago. And amid rising tensions between Washington and the two other countries it has called an "axis of evil" — Iran and North Korea — there is a growing belief within the military's ranks that the White House's rhetoric about pre-emptive war is out of sync with the U.S. military's strained resources.

Some inside the Pentagon criticized senior Bush administration officials for assuming the war in Iraq would end when U.S. troops toppled Saddam Hussein's regime and for assuming the United States could reduce its troop presence to just 30,000 soldiers within six months of Baghdad's

fall.

"The administration was flat wrong on Iraq because they had blinders on," said a senior Army official who works on strategic planning at the Pentagon.

As a consequence, the importance of peacekeeping operations and help from allied militaries — ideas that some discounted three years ago as remnants of the Clinton era — are now back in vogue at the Pentagon.

The Pentagon's decision in 2001 to scrap the "two-war doctrine" freed war planners from requiring enough heavy armor divisions to simultaneously fight two major wars, and allowed the Pentagon to invest in more futuristic weaponry like a missile defense system.

The Pentagon has focused too little on preparing for what happens after "major combat operations" end, said the Defense Science Board, which advises Rumsfeld.

"Some have believed, or hoped, that the technological and conceptual advances ... can reduce the time and personnel needed for stabilization and reconstruction," the board said. Unfortunately, we do not find that is the case."

Another possible shift has to do with the perception of American allies. With the Army and Marine Corps striving to meet the Pentagon's troop requirements for Iraq and Afghanistan, the participation of allies has taken on greater importance. Foreign troops would be necessary for any large scale operation the U.S. military might undertake in the future, planners said, if only to share the post-conflict burdens like those confronting the U.S. military in Iraq.

Many Pentagon officials fear that the success Iraq insurgents have had in preventing a U.S. troop reduction in Iraq could be the new rule, rather than the exception, of future conflicts.

"I think that the military's current posture, that 10-30-30 is largely outdated," said Frank Hoffman of the Marine Corps' Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities, a contributor to the Defense Science Board study. "It presumes a model of warfare that we ourselves have made obsolete."

Iraq envoy pick

WASHINGTON — A U.S. diplomat who has worked with reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan is President Bush's choice to be the new American ambassador to Iraq, an administration official said Friday.

Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan-American, will be nominat-

ed to succeed John Negroponte in the post in Baghdad, this source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

U.N. OKs compensation

GENEVA — The United Nations panel overseeing compensation for victims of Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait has approved new awards worth \$265 million,

mostly to families of people who died in Iraqi detention, officials said.

Joe Sills, spokesman for the U.N. Compensation Commission, said on Thursday that the panel approved a total of \$161 million in claims from families of 602 people who were killed in Iraq, as well as two people injured by land mines.

From The Associated Press

Cpl. Jacob C. Palmatier ~ November 11, 1975 - February 24, 2005

"Everything just started flailing"

GI's death changed way Battle Boars pursued mission, led to capture of key suspects

BY DAVID ZUCCHINO

Los Angeles Times

When his battalion took charge here in mid-February, Lt. Col. Roger Cloutier made a vow to himself and his soldiers: If one of them was attacked, the entire battalion would respond swiftly and violently.

"We will hunt down the enemy if he attacks us," the colonel told his staff. "I don't want to give him any rest or refuge. I want to haunt his dreams."

A week later, Cpl. Jacob Palmatier, a 29-year-old administrative clerk, asked to be relieved of desk duty to man a grenade launcher on a convoy headed south. He was in the turret of a five-ton truck when two slivers of shrapnel from a roadside bomb tore into his midsection.

Minutes into one of his first combat missions, Palmatier bled to death on the side of the road, the 41st American troop to die in Iraq.

It was the first combat death in Iraq for the Battle Boars of the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, and it set in motion a series of events that transformed the battalion's very presence here.

It triggered a manhunt that penetrated an insurgent cell, leading to the capture of eight suspected cell leaders. It precipitated a showdown that redefined the relationship between Cloutier and local sheiks and mayors. It forged tighter bonds between the Battle Boars and the local Iraqi army battalion, energizing an investigation into that unit's infiltration by insurgents.

But more than anything, the repercussions of that single American death fulfilled a commander's promise in a way that gave his soldiers a measure of grim satisfaction and a sense that they were somehow more secure.

"It was the catalyst," Cloutier said, red-eyed and weary after two days of round-the-clock raids and firefights after Palmatier's death. "It was like pulling out the one log that breaks the logjam. Everything just started flowing."

The colonel confronted the local political establishment, threatening villages with an invasion of tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles. "This will not stand," he told tribal sheiks and village mayors, demanding that they divulge the names of the insurgents who were responsible for the bombing.

Palmatier's boss, 1st Lt. David Suttles, a smooth-cheeked corporal four days younger than the corporal, was with him when he died.

Suttles believes Palmatier's was a meaningful death in which good flowed from tragedy.

"Because of the response to the



STEVE HEBERT/Polaris Image

Lt. David Suttles hold back tears while he speaks during the memorial service for Cpl. Jacob Palmatier at Forward Operating Base Normandy near Muqaddiyah, Iraq. Palmatier was the first soldier from 1/30 Infantry to die during this rotation to Iraq, when the vehicle he was riding in was hit by an IED on Feb. 24.

"We will hunt down the enemy if he attacks us. I don't want to give him any rest or refuge. I want to haunt his dreams."

Lt. Col. Roger Cloutier

Battle Boars of the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division commander

attack, and what we learned and what we did afterward, everyone in this battalion will be safer because of his death," Suttles said, smoking a cigarette on his cot just down the hall from Palmatier's bunk.

At 7:17 a.m. on Feb. 24, a bright, sunny Thursday, someone hiding in a field used a cellphone to trigger an explosive charge attached to two 130-millimeter artillery shells as Palmatier's truck rumbled past.

Within minutes, Palmatier was dying and his buddies inside the truck cab, Pfc. Stephen Fuller and Pfc. Marcus Riles, were wounded and struggling to escape from the wreckage.

At Forward Operating Base Normandy, a fortified camp in the area, Cloutier was shaving. He was in a buoyant mood; he had just been told that two insurgents had been blown up and killed while trying to set a roadside bomb. Minutes later, he was told that a man was down on the morning's combat logistical convoy, carrying mail and supplies.

Cloutier sent a quick-reaction force to search for suspects. He surrounded the site with tanks and Bradleys. His Iraqi army counterpart, Col. Theer Ismael Abid Tamimi, set up eight roving checkpoints around Muqaddiyah,

a market town in the flat farm country on the edge of the Sunni Triangle 60 miles northeast of Baghdad.

At one checkpoint, Iraqi soldiers stopped a gray Opel. A similar car had been used in the assassinations of an Iraqi sergeant major Feb. 20 and a city councilman two days later. Inside, according to military officials, were High-Value Targets Nos. 6 and 8 on the battalion's list of the 10 most-wanted insurgents in its sector of Diyala province.

At the bomb site, Cloutier summoned the city's mayor and police chief. He forced them to look at the blood and wreckage. He warned them, "We're not going to play this game."

The colonel conveyed the same message to tribal sheiks and the mayors of surrounding villages. "I told them I knew that they knew who did this," Cloutier said. The colonel ordered local officials to report to his office at 5 p.m. that day with a list of suspects' names.

Cloutier also wanted to send a message to his soldiers. He had them pick up every bit of metal and paper and wreckage at the site.

They wiped up every drop of blood. He didn't want to leave anything for the insurgents to claim as trophies.

Late that afternoon, sheiks, mayors and police officials filed into Cloutier's sparsely furnished office inside a former Iraqi military compound, just past a stuffed boar's head mounted over the operations center.

Now, 10 hours after Palmatier's death, Cloutier was seething. He did not greet the men. He did not offer them tea. He did not stand.

For nearly an hour, he railed at the Iraqis. "I told them I have money in one hand and tanks in the other," he said. "I asked them what they wanted: the money or the tank."

After he finished, the colonel paused and said, "Now I want the names."

The Iraqis handed him 13 names of alleged insurgents, he said. One by one, he asked the officials to promise to support him and the newly elected Iraqi government against the insurgents. Each man agreed, he said.

Information provided by the officials, along with intelligence from the interrogation of the two suspects from the checkpoint, helped lead Abid and Cloutier to prefabricated houses along Lake Hamrin near the Iranian border, Cloutier said.

The next night, a convoy of armored Humvees and Bradleys rolled out of Normandy, accompanied by soldiers from Abid's 205th Iraqi army battalion. At the edge of the lake, the American vehicles surrounded two houses.

Iraqi soldiers broke through the front door of the first house. In a bedroom with his wife, his young children asleep in another bedroom, was Target No. 2, Commanders, citing security concerns, did not release the names of detained suspects.) Soldiers found weapons, ammunition and bomb-making materials in the two houses, intelligence officers said. Also recovered, they said, were documents linking the detained man to guerrillas from the war-torn Russian republic of Chechnya and a photograph of the suspect in Syria with other insurgents.

The next day, soldiers returned to the houses, using sticks to punch out foam ceiling tiles. From above a child's bedroom, a machine gun, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and a bag of ammunition clattered to the floor. Soldiers also found booklets titled "Jihad in Iraq" and two identity cards, both with Target No. 2's photo and the words in English: "Syndicate of Honorable Gentlemen in Iraq."

Under interrogation, Target No. 2 provided the names of seven local men who he said served as financiers and planners for the cell, intelligence officers said. The following night, in three raids in downtown Muqaddiyah, Iraqi soldiers backed by American troops stormed into several homes and detained five of the seven.

Less than 72 hours after Palmatier's death, three of the battalion's 10 most-wanted men had been captured, along with five others alleged to be key members of the cell.

Cloutier said three of the suspects had ordered the bombing that killed Palmatier. Officials also obtained the name of the man who had planted the bomb, he and an intelligence officer added.

On Sunday, the battalion assembled in full battle gear for the corporal's memorial service, flanked by dozens of Iraqi soldiers in scarlet berets. Palmatier's rifle, boots, helmet and dog tags were arranged on a pedestal, along with his Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

Cloutier and Suttles fought back tears as they rose to speak. The lieutenant said Palmatier was doing his job perfectly, scanning the zone for threats, the launcher, when the explosion killed him.

The colonel said, "If you measure a man's wealth by the number of people who love him, you'd have to say Jacob Palmatier was rich indeed."



Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The amphibious assault ship USS Essex sails in the Persian Gulf last year in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Navy has 23 such ships; the Marine Corps would like to use 28 to 30.

Navy is cutting amphib ships short, Marine general warns

Magnus: Present number not enough to be effective force

By LEO SHANE III
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Marines' top resources official expressed serious concerns Thursday about the number of Navy ships and the ability of the fleet to rapidly deploy its troops to major combat operations overseas.

Marine Corps Deputy Commandant Lt. Gen. Robert Magnus said his forces need 28 to 30 amphibious assault ships ready for major combat operations. Currently, the Navy has 23 in its fleet.

He said the Navy's plan to build only four new ships next year — only one of which is an amphibious assault ship — leaves him worried about both services' futures.

"Quality is important, and we get the quality that we want," he told members of the House Armed Services Committee. "But the quantity itself is a problem.

It's a problem with having peacetime forward presence. It's a problem for being able to rapidly surge the right number of ships ... It's a problem for major combat operations."

Navy officials said their plans take into consideration both force capabilities and financial responsibility.

"If there were more money, we'd buy more ships," said John Young Jr., assistant secretary of the Navy. "But we believe we've struck the right balance."

The fleet today consists of about 290 surface ships and submarines. In testimony before Congress last month, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark said that number could rise as high as 325 or drop as low as 243 in coming years, depending on budget constraints and technological breakthroughs.

Several representatives voiced concern over the fleet size and limited shipbuilding schedule for fiscal 2006, for

which \$8.7 billion is allotted in the proposed defense budget. Over the next five years construction of 49 new ships is planned.

Rep. Jo Ann Davis, R-Va., also objected to Navy plans to decommission one of its aircraft carriers — reducing the fleet from 12 to 11 — saying she worries the fleet could drop even further temporarily if older carriers are retired and their replacements are delayed by budgetary problems.

Magnus said he understands the need to modernize the fleet, and he said the improved efficiency of the replacement ships will allow the Navy to keep a somewhat smaller force with the same capabilities.

"Slipping or cutting the replacements is what concerns me," he said. "The trend over time goes down ... When you need that capability in the future, it does concern me."

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Indonesia, other allies among those to receive U.S. military training

By STEPHEN J. HEDGES
Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON — If the Bush administration has its way, military officers from Indonesia will soon arrive in the United States for training by the American military, making that country just the latest to receive such help as an ally in the war on terror.

But critics say Indonesia is also a good example of what's wrong with foreign military training, employed increasingly by the Bush administration since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

These nations — many unstable and in volatile regions — could ultimately use their American-trained armies against their own people, opponents of the training aid say, and in the long run make the United States a symbol of oppression and hurt the war on terror.

Several of the countries receiving U.S. arms and training as allies in the war on terror have given U.S. military and intelligence forces new access to parts of the world that were previously difficult to penetrate. But some of those same countries also have questionable human-rights records, drawing sharp and regular criticism in annual State Department reports.

In 2004, the State Department noted that the Indonesian government's "human-rights record remained poor."

U.S. military aid to Indonesia was cut off by Congress in 1992, and only a limited military exchange has been allowed, intended to increase the Indonesian military's awareness of human rights. But with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's recent approval, Indonesia is immediately eligible to spend \$600,000 in U.S. aid to send officers to American military courses.

After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the need for allies in regions where al-Qaida terrorist network operated changed everything.

Military aid packages to places as diverse as Yemen, Eritrea, Tajikistan and Georgia have opened doors for the U.S. in parts of the world that were hitherto out of reach.

And military-to-military training, U.S. officials say, is playing a little-noticed but crucial role in efforts to build strategic bridges with new partners in the Horn of Africa to name one such place.

"The work that we're doing right now in Africa is so very important, simply because we don't want to see happen in Iraq what's happened in Iraq and other places," Marine Gen. James Jones, head of the U.S. European Command, told a Senate committee last week. "What we're trying to do in Africa, if I could sum it up, is to try to engage in a pro-active way before we have to engage in a reactive way."



U.S. Marine Maj. Chas Cox, left, and Maj. Harry Thomssett, of the British Royal Marines, inspect a British cannon at Fort Ticonderoga at Ticonderoga, N.Y., on Thursday. They and 16 other active-duty or retired military personnel are touring historic sites as part of a class at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College in Quantico, Va.

AP

Old battles teach modern troops

By CHRIS CAROLA
The Associated Press

TICONDEROGA, N.Y. — Long supply lines, language barriers, guerrilla warfare — those issues meant as much to the 18th-century soldier loading his musket at Fort Ticonderoga as they do to today's armor-clad, night-vision-equipped Marine in Fallujah.

A group of Marine Corps-led officers is spending the week visiting Revolutionary War battlefields from the fort's walls to the shores of the Delaware River, studying old campaigns and applying centuries-old lessons to situations facing today's commanders.

"How do I keep my foot from falling? How do I maximize the things I have?" said Maj. Melanie

Mercan of Detroit, ticking off some of the hypothetical questions prompted by Thursday's visit to Fort Ticonderoga, located on the southern end of Lake Champlain, 85 miles north of Albany.

Mercan is among the 18 active-duty or retired military personnel making a three-state tour as part of a course given at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College in Quantico, Va. Most are Marines, but the Navy, Army, Air Force and the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency also are represented.

There's even a redeco in the mix — Maj. Harry Thomssett of the Royal Marines, who had to endure some good-natured razzing from his American comrades earlier this week during a tour of the

Lexington and Concord battle sites outside Boston.

The officers are getting an 18th-century grant's view of the terrain, slogging through slush in Massachusetts and hiking up a mountain in 12-degree weather.

"We definitely have an appreciation of what the Continentals went through back then," Marine Maj. Lew Vogler said after Thursday's visit.

The participants take on the roles of British and American commanders, attacking or defending their decisions, said retired Marine Lt. Col. Jack Matthews, the trip's leader and the college's associate dean of academics.

"The nature of war doesn't change," Thomssett said. "The technologies change, but overall the nature doesn't change."

IN THE WORLD

Spain marks anniversary of Madrid train bombings

By MAR ROMAN
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — Spaniards lit candles, laid down flowers and observed a long, mournful silence Friday to mark the first anniversary of the country's worst terrorist attack, when 10 al-Qaida bombs ripped through crowded commuter trains, killing 191 and wounding more than 1,500.

King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia led government leaders and other dignitaries during the main memorial — a silent, five-minute noon vigil inaugurating a grove of 192 olive and cypress trees, one for each person killed last March 11 and a policeman killed when Islamic militant suspects seeking to avoid arrest blew themselves up.

The grove in Madrid's main park has been christened the "Forest of the Absent."

Without bells or other signal, the normally bustling Spanish society paused for the five minutes of quiet remembrance at the designated time of noon. Trains made unscheduled stops at stations.

Construction workers on scaffolding put down their tools. Office workers poured into the streets. After the vigil, a young cellist dressed in black played "Song of the Birds" by Pablo Casals, a piece the late Spanish cellist had written in dedication to peace.

"I feel so sad. It was so unfair," said Bakia Goitia, a 48-year-old civil servant. She recalled the day of the bombing as "catastrophic. Everything seemed to go out of control."

Goitia was part of a crowd of thousands stretching as far as the eye could see along Paseo de la Castellana, Madrid's main north-south artery, grieving over an attack that cut across nationality, killing immigrants from Ecuador to Ukraine, from France to the Philippines.

At Atocha, a crowd of at least 1,000 people broke into applause after observing the five minutes of silence. Clapping after a funeral is a common Spanish



A man prays after lighting a candle to commemorate the victims of the March 11, 2004, train bombings at Madrid's Atocha train station on Friday.

way of paying one's respects.

Attached to a railing overlooking the platform that was bombed was a single red rose with a sign that said, "For you, my love, who are no longer with me."

Vietnamese angered over the dismissal of Agent Orange lawsuit

By TINI TRAN
The Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam — A Vietnamese group expressed anger Friday over a U.S. judge's dismissal of a historic class-action lawsuit claiming American chemical companies had committed war crimes by making the defoliant Agent Orange during the Vietnam War.

U.S. District Judge Jack B. Weinstein threw out the case in Brooklyn, N.Y., on Thursday, saying he did not agree that Agent Orange and similar herbicides should be considered poisons banned under international rules of war.

U.S. aircraft sprayed more than 21 million gallons of defoliant, mostly Agent Orange, on Vietnam from 1962-71 to destroy crops and remove communist forces' cover. It has been blamed for a vast range of health problems.

"We are disappointed.... Weinstein has turned a blind eye before the obvious truth. It's a shame for him to put out that decision. We just want justice, nothing more," said Nguyen Trung Nhan, vice president of the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange. He said the group was thinking of filing an appeal.

The lawsuit was the first attempt by Vietnamese plaintiffs to seek compensation for the effects of Agent Orange, which contains the toxic chemical dioxin and has been linked to cancer, diabetes and birth defects

among Vietnamese soldiers and civilians and U.S. veterans.

Weinstein also found that the plaintiffs could not prove that Agent Orange had caused their illnesses, largely due to a lack of research.

Lawyers for chemical manufacturers Monsanto, Dow Chemical and a dozen other companies had argued the firms should not be punished for following the orders of the nation's president and that international law exempts corporations, as opposed to individuals, from liability for alleged war crimes.

"We've said all along that any issues regarding wartime activities should be resolved by the U.S. and Vietnamese governments," said Dow Chemical spokesman Scott Wheeler. "We believe that defoliants saved lives by protecting allied forces from enemy ambush and did not create adverse health effects."

The Justice Department had said a ruling against the firms could cripple the president's power to direct the military.

Many U.S. veterans and Vietnamese have long blamed Agent Orange for cancer, diabetes, spina bifida and other problems. The U.S. government claims there is no direct evidence linking dioxin to the ailments. However, about 10,000 U.S. veterans receive disability benefits related to Agent Orange exposure.

Vietnam's government has never formally asked for compensation for Agent Orange victims.

Pakistan's Islamic court declares acquittal of woman's rapists illegal

By PAUL HAVEN
The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan's highest Islamic court on Friday reinstated the convictions of five men sentenced to death for raping a woman on orders from a village council, following a firestorm of criticism after a lower tribunal ordered the men freed.

The decision by the Federal Shariat Court was yet another twist in the case of Mukhtar Mai, a 33-year-old woman who said she was raped in June 2002 after elders in her village ordered the

attack as punishment for her brother's alleged illicit affair with a woman from another family.

"We welcome the decision, and we know our case is strong," said Ramzan Khalid Joya, Mai's lawyer. An attorney for the men said he had not had time to study the decision and would have no comment.

Six men were sentenced to death in August 2002, but on March 3 the sentences of five of them were overturned. The sixth man had his death sentence reduced to life in prison.

Human rights groups around

the world denounced the ruling, and thousands of women rallied in Multan earlier this week demanding justice and protection for Mai, who said she fears the men would seek revenge if released. The Canadian High Commissioner visited Mai in Meerwala, a village about 350 miles southwest of Islamabad to pledge money for a school she runs.

The government promised to crack down on such attacks following Mai's rape, pushing through tougher sentencing laws, but women's rights activists say little has changed for the vast majority of women.

EU threatens to take Iran to Security Council if talks fail

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — The European Union will support U.S. calls to bring Tehran before the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions unless it agrees to scrap the technology that can be used to make nuclear arms, according to a document obtained Friday by The Associated Press.

If Iran does not agree, "We shall have no choice but to support referring Iran's nuclear program to the U.N. Security Council," said the confidential EU document on the state of negotiations on uranium enrichment between

Iran, Germany, France and Britain.

The five-page document, which is meant to update EU countries on the talks, says that — while the negotiations "are proceeding in the right direction" on some side issues — stark differences persist on the main issue, which is Iran's enrichment program.

"Both sides have strongly held positions on this difficult issue, which remains at the core of negotiations," according to the document.

A Western diplomat familiar with the talks confirmed the two sides remained deadlocked.

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Syria troops leave north Lebanon

BY ZEINA KARAM
The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — The last Syrian troops left northern Lebanon on Friday but left behind intelligence agents in nine offices, while the U.N. Mideast envoy said Syria needs to produce a timetable for a full withdrawal from the rest of Lebanon.

Under international pressure, Syria this week began pulling 14,000 forces back to the eastern Bekaa Valley. It is to negotiate with the government on their withdrawal from Lebanon at a later date.

Convoys of Syrian trucks, some towing artillery pieces, were seen driving Thursday night toward northern Syria. Empty trucks and buses arrived in central Lebanon on Thursday, apparently to pick up Syrian supplies and soldiers who are headed east.

Nine Syrian intelligence offices remain in northern Lebanon, including the towns of Tripoli, Akkar, Minye and Amoun.

Plainclothes intelligence agents operate from the guarded offices in apartment buildings and deal directly with Lebanese.

U.N. envoy Terje Rød-Larsen said Friday that the United Nations expects President Bashar Assad to produce a timetable for the full withdrawal of Syrian troops and intelligence officers from Lebanon.

Speaking in Amman, where he sought Jordanian support for U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559 on Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, Rød-Larsen indicated he was optimistic about the meeting with the Syrian president in Damascus on Saturday.

"I expect that we will get the commitment and timetables for the full implementation of 1559," Rød-Larsen said.

Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Friday that Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon should include the pull-



A Lebanese soldier stands guard Friday as a Syrian tank passes during a continuing redeployment of troops near the village of Hammana, in the central mountains east of Beirut, Lebanon.

out of intelligence agents — a stance that matches Washington's view.

Lebanese opposition leader Walid Jumblatt said the opposition wants a full withdrawal of all Syrian forces from Lebanon, "especially representatives of the security services."

Karami, who was reappointed to post Thursday, 10 days after resigning amid mass street protests, said he would welcome an international independent delegation headed by former President Jimmy Carter to observe the parliamentary elections, even though he warned that the polls may have to be postponed.

The holding of free and fair elections, due to begin in April and continue into May, has

been stressed repeatedly by the United States.

"The goal in the near term is to make certain that the Lebanese people have a fair opportunity to have free elections and to determine their own political future," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Thursday.

Karami, who was reappointed to post Thursday, 10 days after resigning amid mass street protests, said he would welcome an international independent delegation headed by former President Jimmy Carter to observe the parliamentary elections, even though he warned that the polls may have to be postponed.

U.S. man investigated

BERLIN — A U.S. man is being investigated for warning that someone would fly planes into a cathedral in Mainz during President Bush's visit to Germany last month, a prosecutor said Friday.

The suspect, a Mainz resident whose name was not released, sent a fax to a Berlin hotel on Feb. 22 saying that four Cessna planes were going to fly into the city's cathedral the next day, when U.S. first lady Laura Bush and her German counterpart Doris Schroeder-Kopf were to visit, said Mainz prosecutor Klaus-Peter Mithel.

Prosecutors do not believe that the man actually intended an attack, the Mainzer Allgemeine Zeitung reported. The man has not been arrested but could face up to two years in jail.

Heineken to unveil 'Light'

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands — Heineken NV said Friday it will introduce a low-calorie, low-carbohydrate beer branded with the Heineken name in the United States, hoping to gain more of a growing segment within a stable market.

The new beer, "Heineken Premium Light," will compete with domestic and foreign light brands. According to Heineken, light beers made up 47 percent of the U.S. beer market in 2004, up from 44 percent in 2000.

There is a "growing need among the U.S. consumers for higher-quality light beer brands that have a premium cachet," said Heineken board member Marc Bolland.

Chess champ retires

MOSCOW — Garry Kasparov, the chess world's youngest-ever champion and undisputed king the last two decades, made a stunning move shortly after winning a prestigious tournament in Spain: He retired from professional play.

The announcement by the world's No. 1 ranked chess player since 1984 came shortly after he won the 14-match Linares tournament in Spain on Thursday, despite losing the final game.

Kasparov, 41, became the youngest world champion ever at age 22. He said part of the reason he was retiring was because he saw no real goals left to accomplish in professional chess.

He said Friday he wanted to concentrate more on politics in Russia. He has emerged as an outspoken critic of President Vladimir Putin and is playing a leading role in the Committee 2008. Free Choice, a group formed by prominent liberal opposition leaders.

Iranians released

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Police released 56 Iranian pro-monarchist protesters after removing them from a Lufthansa plane early Friday, ending a 15-hour protest by the group against the Iranian government, a spokeswoman said.

About 100 police officers forcefully removed the protesters from the plane, which was moved away from the terminal at Brussels airport after negotiations failed to end the protest at 3:30 a.m. Police spokeswoman Els Cleemput said.

From The Associated Press

Report says doctors from U.S. treated Yushchenko

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — American doctors secretly assisted in the treatment of Viktor Yushchenko after he was apparently poisoned while running for president of Ukraine, The Washington Post reported Friday.

U.S. officials kept the doctors' role secret because they did not want to appear to be interfering in the tumultuous Ukrainian election, according to the report.

Yushchenko, who won a Dec. 26 election after an earlier vote was disallowed because of fraud, fell ill in September after dining with the former leader of the Ukrainian security services. He was treated in an Austrian hospital and tests confirmed he had been poisoned with a massive dose of dioxin.

He recovered, but the illness forced him to stop campaigning for weeks and left him badly disfigured.

The Post reported that a team of doctors flew to Vienna in December. The lead doctor, Gregory Sathoff, executive director of the University of Virginia's Critical Incident Analysis Group, said the



Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko

U.S. government was not involved in their work.

But the newspaper quoted an unidentified U.S. official as saying the doctors became involved after Yushchenko's family appealed for assistance through a Pentagon official. The State Department provided logistical support for the doctors' trip, the official said.

Sathoff stayed in touch with the State Department and had informed them that team members were being followed by police or Russian intelligence agents and would cut short their trip, the official told the Post.

Officials said the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, John Herbst, and the U.S. Embassy in Vienna also provided assistance, the newspaper reported.

U.S. issues warning of 'possible' attack at Indonesian mall

BY CHRIS BRUMMITT

The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — The U.S. Embassy on Friday warned its citizens to stay away from the World Trade Center shopping mall in the Indonesian capital because of a "possible bomb threat" in the next three days.

A message posted on the Embassy Web site said U.S. officials "are aware of a possible bomb threat against World Trade Center Mangga Dua in North Jakarta for the period 11-14 March."

"Americans in Jakarta should avoid the area surrounding this facility," the message said.

It gave no more details about the threat.

Indonesia's chief of detectives, Lt. Gen. Suyitno Lundung, said he was unaware of the threat.

A security officer at the mall said his department had not been informed of the warning and that the building was packed with shoppers as usual. The mall, which sells mostly cheap clothes and electronics, is usually crowded on weekends, though it is well outside the downtown district and is not especially popular with foreigners.

Jemah Islamiyah, an al-Qaida terrorist group that operates in several Southeast Asian countries, has been blamed for a string of terrorist attacks in recent years. They include the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists, a 2003 blast at Jakarta's J.W. Marriott hotel that killed 12 and the suicide car bombing of the Australian Embassy last September, which killed 10.

Officials have arrested scores of Jemah Islamiyah suspects, but local police and foreign governments have repeatedly warned that more attacks are likely. Several countries warn their citizens not to travel to Indonesia at all.

While many Jemah Islamiyah leaders have been captured, two of its most dangerous bombmakers are still at large, regional security officials say.

Before Christmas, Australia warned it had "credible information" that terrorists could be targeting the Hilton Hotel chain in Indonesia. No attack occurred.

IN THE STATES

Rice: U.S., Europe near deal on Iran

BY ANNE GEARAN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration will support European diplomatic efforts to end Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions by offering modest economic incentives to the Tehran regime, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Friday.

The administration agreed to drop objections to Iran's eventual membership in the World Trade Organization and agreed to allow some sales of civilian aircraft parts to Tehran, she said in a statement released by the State Department.

Rice said the administration will consider allowing the spare parts sales on a case-by-case basis. Many of the sales would be from European Union countries.

The announcement marks a policy shift from the hard line position that Iran deserved no reward for merely doing what that international arms compact requires.

"Today's announcement demonstrates that we are prepared to take practical steps to support European efforts to this end," Rice said.

There was no immediate response from Tehran.

Rice noted that the Europeans have been very clear with the Iranians that there will have to be certain "objective guarantees" that Iran is not trying to use a nuclear program to provide cover for a weapons program.

"The spotlight must remain on Iran, and on Iran's obligation to live up to its international commitments," she said.

U.S. admits to role in looting Holocaust train

The Associated Press

MIAMI — The federal government on Friday reached a \$25.5 million settlement with the families of Hungarian Holocaust victims and will acknowledge the U.S. Army's role in commandeering a trainload of the families' treasures during World War II.

Under the terms of the settlement, the money will be distributed to needy Hungarian Holocaust survivors rather than individual claimants who lost family possessions.

About \$21 million in funding for humanitarian services will be distributed to social service agencies worldwide based on the percentage of survivors.

Up to \$3.85 million is proposed for legal fees and costs. A total of \$500,000 would fund an archive on the so-called Nazi "Gold

Train" for scholarly and educational uses.

"The case never really was about money. It was about having a reckoning with history," said Sam Dubbin, one of the families' lawyers. He called the agreement "a great outcome."

The Justice Department, which negotiated on behalf of the government, issued a statement saying it was "very pleased to announce" the settlement but said it would be inappropriate to add comment on a pending legal matter.

A commission appointed by then-President Clinton concluded in 1999 that high-ranking U.S. Army officers and troops plundered the train after it was intercepted on its way to Germany in May 1945.

The train carried gold, jewels, 1,200 paintings, silver, china, porcelain and other heirlooms seized from Jewish families by the Nazis.



Law enforcement personnel gather outside the Fulton County Courthouse in Atlanta on Friday. At least three people, including Fulton County Superior Judge Rowland Barnes and a deputy, were shot and killed in the courthouse earlier. The suspect is at large.

AP

Judge and two others fatally shot in Atlanta
Missing gunmen was on trial for rape

BY HARRY R. WEBER
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — A judge presiding over a rape trial was shot to death Friday along with two other people at the Fulton County Courthouse. A fourth person was wounded and a search was under way for the suspect, the trial.



Nichols

Li. Gov. Mark Taylor confirmed that Superior Court Judge Rowland Barnes and his court reporter were killed.

He gave no other details

in announcing the deaths in the state Senate. A deputy died later at a hospital, while a second deputy had minor wounds, police said.

The judge was shot on the eighth floor of the courthouse, while one deputy was shot on a street corner just outside the building, said police Officer Alan Osborne.

Authorities were searching for a green 1997 Honda Accord that

was carjacked from a newspaper reporter.

Fulton County Police Lt. Clarence Huber identified the suspect as 33-year-old Brian Nichols, who was on trial on rape and other charges stemming from an incident in August. It was not immediately known how the suspect got a gun.

"We heard some noise. It sounded like three or four shots. At the time, we thought it was just an engine backfiring," said Chuck Cole, a civil defense attorney who was in an adjoining parking deck when he heard gunfire at around 9:10 a.m.

Nichols apparently obtained the gun somewhere in between the courthouse's detention area and the courtroom where his trial was set to resume in the afternoon, said Fulton County District Attorney's spokesman Erik Friedly. He said Barnes was hearing civil cases at the time of the shooting.

"It's my understanding he made his way into the courtroom on his own," Friedly said of Nichols.

County employee Ali Lamei, who works on a floor below where the shooting started, said he was told by officers in the building that a sheriff's sergeant

was escorting a prisoner when the prisoner grabbed the sergeant's gun and shootings occurred.

A sheriff's deputy died at Grady Hospital and a second was being treated for graze wounds, police Sgt. John Quigley said.

Don O'Brian, a features reporter for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, was carjacked by the fleeing suspect at a downtown parking garage as the reporter was arriving to work, said Mary Dugenske, a spokeswoman for the newspaper. She said O'Brian was being treated at a nearby hospital and was in good condition.

Nichols, who also faced charges of sodomy, possession of a machine gun, possession of a handgun, and possession of marijuana, had not taken the stand yet in the trial, which started Tuesday.

The district attorney's office said Nichols was facing a retrial of the rape case after a hung jury was declared in the case a week ago.

All the judges in the courtroom were locked in their chambers immediately after the shootings.

The courthouse's 400-plus workers were eventually evacuated, and schools and other buildings in the area were locked down during the day.

Offer in Fla. right-to-die case

TAMPA, Fla. — A man fighting to have a feeding tube removed from his brain-damaged wife on Friday rejected a California businessman's offer to pay him \$1 million to give up his right to decide her medical treatment.

The "offer," which the husband's attorney labeled "offensive," came hours after a judge refused to let the state's social services agency intervene — a move that would have delayed next week's scheduled removal of the tube.

Other such offers, including one for \$10 million, had already been made and rejected by Michael Schiavo, said his attorney, George Felos.

Social Security loses Bush support

WASHINGTON — President Bush loses backing from independent women and older Americans when he changes the topic from terrorism and foreign policy to overhauling Social Security, an Associated Press poll found.

While a majority of Americans approve of Bush's handling of terrorism and foreign policy, just over a third, 37 percent, like his approach to Social Security.

Some polls indicate he's been losing ground on the Social Security issue.

From The Associated Press

Coming Soon to
STARS AND STRIPES.

INTERNET
SHOPPING
GUIDE
2005

What you need
to know to be a
Savvy Net
Shopper.

March 16, 2005



Clinton recovering

NEW YORK — Former President Clinton was in good spirits and looking forward to getting on his feet after surgery to remove scar tissue and fluid from his left lung, his wife said.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and their daughter, Chelsea, were at the hospital Thursday as doctors cleaned up complications from Clinton's heart bypass operation of six months ago.

Hospital officials predicted "even better than a full recovery" for the former president following the four-hour operation and predicted Clinton would be walking within 24 hours.

Suspected mob ties

NEW YORK — Two retired police detectives living in Las Vegas and double-crossing as Mafia hitmen while on the force and gave confidential information to the mob for more than a decade, federal prosecutors charged.

Louis Eppolito and his former partner, Stephen Caracappa, were arrested Wednesday night at a restaurant of the Las Vegas Strip, law enforcement officials said Thursday.

Each is charged with eight counts of racketeering, including, murder conspiracy, obstruction of justice, drug distribution and money laundering.

Wrong drug given

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center administered the wrong kind of penicillin to more than 650 patients who were being treated for syphilis or who had reported having contact with someone known or believed to have the disease, a federal investigation has shown.

That's more than twice as many patients as previously thought.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday that the inadvertent use of the wrong drug was discovered only after a patient read a package insert stating that the medicine he had received was not intended for treatment of syphilis.

Use of the wrong drug by the Gay & Lesbian Center began in January 1999 and continued until the error was discovered a year ago, officials said. At that time, about 300 patients were thought to have been given the wrong drug.

New rule limits smog

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration set new limits on smog and soot pollution Thursday with the aim of benefiting tens of millions of people who live downwind of the dirtiest coal-fired power plants in the East, South and Midwest.

The new regulation covers 28 states, mostly east of the Mississippi River, and the District of Columbia. It requires most of them to cut smog-forming nitrogen oxides and soot-producing sulfur dioxide that can drift by wind long distances across state lines, the Environmental Protection Agency said.

From wire services

Teen details relations with Jackson

BY TIM MOLLOY
The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — In testimony that was hushed and sometimes mumbled, Michael Jackson's accuser described a night at the Neverland ranch that he said started off in the arcade and ended in the entertainer's bed.

The 15-year-old boy told jurors Thursday that Jackson on that particular night asked him if he ever fondled himself and offered to "do it for me."

"He said if men don't masturbate, they can get to a level where they might rape a girl or they can be in court more than an hour late because of a trip to an emergency room which with his lawyers described as a serious back problem caused by a fall. The judge threatened to have him arrested and he didn't come to court, but vacated the arrest warrant after Jackson arrived."

Under questioning by District

Attorney Tom Sneddon, the boy began his second day on the stand Thursday by describing how he and Jackson drank alcohol and looked at sex magazines together.

The boy said Jackson molested him twice, both times in the singer's bedroom. He said they both wore pairs of Jackson's pajamas.

The second incident occurred "about a day after" the first encounter, he said. In the second instance, he, he resisted an attempt by Jackson to place the boy's hand on Jackson's genitals.

The accuser's testimony differed from his 14-year-old brother's description of the second molestation, and it was unclear if they were talking about the same alleged incidents.

Defense attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr. accused the witness of making up the story.

"After you met with an attorney, you came up with a story that the top 10 after slipping in No. 1 last year," said Wal-Mart Stores Inc.'s S. Robson Walton.

"No, I never told him about anything," the boy said, referring to the lawyer.

The court planned to handle pending motions Friday and resume testimony Monday.

Pajama-clad Leno mines trial for jokes

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — The judge in the Michael Jackson trial delivered the punch line Friday that Jay Leno has been wanting to hear: The comedian is allowed to crack jokes at Jackson's expense.

Judge Rodney S. Melville made his ruling about Leno as he clarified a gag order preventing everyone involved in the case from discussing it. Leno has been subpoenaed to testify at the trial, and the comedian feared that the order would apply to his monologues on "The Tonight Show."

"I am not attempting to prevent anybody from making a living in the normal way that they make their living," the judge ruled, adding that Leno may not talk about the specific things to which he is a witness.

Before the ruling, Leno was finding creative ways to make jokes about Jackson without opening his mouth.

After arriving "late" for the taping of Thursday's "Tonight Show," Leno stepped out of a black limousine wearing SpongeBob SquarePants pajamas and accompanied by several bodyguards. One of the bodyguards held an open umbrella over Leno's head as the comedian remained silent when asked why he was late. (Earlier in the day, Jackson had arrived late to court wearing pajama bottoms and a T-shirt under a coat.)

Then, as he has in recent days, he called on another comedian, Drew Carey, to handle that night's Jackson story. Carey showed up to court late today wearing his pajama bottoms, Carey told the audience. "You know what? You find the kid wearing the pajama top and we have another court case on our hands."

Leno may be called to testify about having contact with Jackson's accuser or his mother. The defense contends the family tried to kill Leno and others out of money.

Jay Leno still can make jokes about Michael Jackson himself, a judge ruled on Friday.

AP

Buffett closes gap, but Gates still tops list of billionaires

BY MADLEN READ
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Thanks to a surge in demand for steel, the Internet and Scandinavian sofas, there are some new names among the very richest of the world's billionaires.

Indian steel mogul Lakshmi Mittal, American tech magnate Carlos Slim Helu and Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad of Sweden knocked several Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton off the top of Forbes magazine's 2005 rankings of the world's billionaires.

The billionaires are richer and more numerous for the second straight year, but the No. 1 spot is unchanged — Microsoft Corp. founder Bill Gates led the list for the eleventh year in a row with a net worth of \$46.5 billion, slightly less than his \$46.6 billion last year.

Investor Warren Buffett held a close second with \$44 billion, up from \$42.9 billion in 2004.

Mittal — the biggest global gainer after quadrupling his net worth to \$18 billion from \$4.5 billion — climbed 59 rungs from last year to No. 3 in 2005.

Helu came in fourth, up from No. 17 in 2004; Saudi Arabian investor Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Al Saud ranked No. 5; and Ikea's Kamprad rose to No. 6 from No.

13 last year. Rounding out the top 10 were Microsoft's Paul Allen, German supermarket company owner Karl Albrecht, Oracle Corp.'s Lawrence Ellison — returning to the top 10 after slipping in No. 11 last year — and Wal-Mart Stores Inc.'s S. Robson Walton.

Four other billionaires took spots 11 through 13, with Alice and Helen Walton once again sharing the title of "richest woman in the world" with \$18 billion each. The five family members of the late Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton are together worth over \$90 billion.

The number of billionaires grew to a record 691 from 587 last year, and their total net worth rose by \$300 billion to \$2.2 trillion.

A confluence of factors contributed to the increase, said Forbes associate editor Luisa Kroll, including positive performance by many stock markets around the world — for example, in Ukraine

and Iceland, countries that debuted on the list along with Kazakhstan and Poland — and the falling dollar.

Between February 2004 and February 2005, the 12-nation euro rose about 4 percent against the dollar, while the British pound rose about 3 percent versus the U.S. currency.

"If you were a euro-based billionaire, you could've done nothing and seen a 20 percent increase" over the past two years, Kroll said.

One of this year's new billionaires — and one of the list's 68 women, up from 53 last year — was Martha Stewart, whose wealth swelled to \$1 billion despite her conviction for lying about a stock sale and ensuing five-month prison stint.

Jail time was harder on the fortune of Russia's embattled Yukos oil company chief Mikhail Khodorkovsky, this year's biggest dollar loss after seeing an 85 percent tumble from \$15 billion to \$2.2 billion.

The world's richest

For the 11th year in a row, Microsoft founder Bill Gates topped Forbes magazine's list of the world's billionaires.

Forbes top five

1. **William Gates III**
Wash., 49 years old
Net worth: \$46.5 billion
Microsoft founder

2. **Warren Buffett**
Nebr., 74
\$44 billion
Investor

3. **Lakshmi Mittal**
India, 54
\$25 billion
Steel mogul

4. **Carlos Slim Helu**
Mexico, 65
\$23 billion
Telecom titan

5. **Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Al Saud**
Saudi Arabia, 48
\$23.7 billion
Investor

SOURCE: Forbes

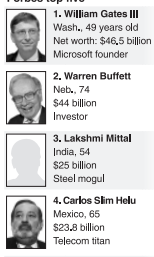
Among the big winners were Google Inc.'s Sergey Brin and Larry Page, who made their first appearance last year with \$1 billion each. The tech moguls jumped nearly 500 spots this year to No. 55, their net worth multiplying to \$7.2 billion after the company's initial public offering in August.



Allen



Stewart



Gates

say, can you sing this song?

Project attempts to teach Americans the national anthem – and get the lyrics right

BY ANDREW
DRUCKENBROD
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The poem Francis Scott Key jotted still flying after a British bombardment at Baltimore's Fort McHenry in 1814 is still powerful and inspiring. That is, if you know the words.

An effort is under way to get Americans to learn the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner," supported in part by a new Harris survey that indicates nearly two-thirds of U.S. citizens don't know all the words to the national anthem. Those who mumble it at sporting events will get a chance to learn them, care of the National Anthem Project.

Project, a private sector endeavor organized by the National Association for Music Education. The program, which started this week in Washington, D.C., will target classrooms and older Americans and culminate with a celebration and a massive singing of the anthem in 2007.

But what about the music? "The Star-Spangled Banner's" serpentine melody has confounded one of the trickiest out there. Is John Stafford Smith's music as worthy of

praise as Key's poem?

"I love this anthem and I can't imagine it not being there," said Craig Jessop, music director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. But he points out that the tune itself is difficult to sing.

"[The vocal range] is an octave and a fifth," he said. "Most songs stay within an octave range."

That's why you tend to hear a fuzzy sound right at "And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air" and voices breaking up at "O'er the land of the free."

That's part of the reason there was a movement to name "America the Beautiful" as the national anthem a few years back.

John Mahlmann, executive director of the National Association for Music Education, posits that it wouldn't be so difficult if music teachers had not been reduced in schools around the nation, a major subtext to the National Anthem Project.

Why, then, don't adults have a better grasp of the anthem's words and music? There isn't a clear answer. In most gatherings or sporting events, audiences listen to a celebrity or a group play the "Star-Spangled Banner" rather than sing it themselves.

"National anthems, almost by definition, are meant to be sung by the population, not watched. For whatever reason, over a period of time, we have become a nation of watchers and listeners," Mahlmann said.



GREG L. DAVIS/Stars & Stripes

U.S. Army Capt. Misty Cornett sings the National Anthem at the start of a World Cup game held in Taegu in June 2002. Cornett, a CH-47 Chinook pilot, was with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, based at Camp Humphries in South Korea.

An undated wedding photograph of Amelia and George Limpert.

83-year-old love story closes its last chapter

The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — In the days after losing her husband of 82 years last year, centenarian Amelia Limpert mourned terribly, saying she wanted to rejoin the soul mate she met doing factory work after World War I.

Now, more than 13 months after George Limpert's passing at age 102, his 101-year-old widow was laid to rest Monday. Kuttie Funeral Home said Amelia Limpert died last week at a retirement center where the Limperts closed out their golden years, never shy about holding hands.

This love story dates to 1919, when George was a machinist at a St. Louis plant that made paint spray guns and lamp guards. Amelia was a teenager from Pennsylvania who worked the assembly line.

George had hoped she'd be his wife, although Amelia's family had other ideas. Their engagement was broken off three times before they finally jumped into his Model T and eloped on Sept. 9, 1921, spending \$8 on a marriage certificate and a civil ceremony with a justice of the peace.

A month later, the devout Roman Catholics had a formal marriage ceremony. He was 20, she an 18-year-old woman with a third-grade education who had taught herself to read and write.

During the Great Depression, the Limperts struggled. George, out of work most of the time, took odd jobs. The couple raised nine children in a one-bedroom home.

The Limperts lost an infant son in 1941 and another son to lung cancer in 1988. During World War II, four of the Limperts' sons went into the armed services. One never came home: Joseph Limpert died as a 19-year-old Marine on Iwo Jima.

Years later, three Limperts sons went to fight in Korea. George went on to work as a machinist at the Chain of Rocks Water Works, rose to foreman and retired in the mid-1960s at age 65 after 24 years on the job.

There are seven surviving sons and daughters, along with 40 grandchildren, 117 great-grandchildren and 43 great-great-grandchildren and 13 great-great-great-grandchildren.

"THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER" by Francis Scott Key

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,

What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?

Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,

O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?

And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,

Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,

O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,

O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?"

Pandas in the mood; officials are hopeful

BY MARTY NILAND
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Love is in the air at the National Zoo's panda house.

The zoo's female panda, Mei Xiang, has begun her annual mating season and had two mating encounters Thursday with the male panda, Tian Tian, zoo spokesman Pepper Long said.

"I don't think there's been a strong successful mating yet, but we still have time to give them," Long said.

The pandas will get several more opportunities over the next couple of days before zoo officials try artificial insemination.

Last year, Tian Tian did not show enough sustained interest in mating with Mei Xiang for a successful breeding. An attempt at artificial insemination was also unsuccessful.

This year, the zoo is hoping to give the pandas a better chance for success by closing their exhibit to the public during the mat-

ing period.

Experts in China and at other U.S. zoos have also advised that the pandas be brought inside and separated to create expectation between the two. They will be put together for short periods, then separated, with that process repeated at different times.

Those who want to see the pandas' progress for themselves can check out the panda web-cams on the National Zoo's Web site. Those cameras are operated by behavior monitors who are looking for signs that Mei Xiang is pregnant.

Mei Xiang, 6, and Tian Tian, 7, are the National Zoo's second pair of giant pandas. Both went on exhibit in December 2000 and are on a 10-year loan from China.

Mei Xiang has not been pregnant, though she experienced a pseudopregnancy in 2003. The zoo said any baby would belong to China, and would likely be sent there.

The zoo's previous panda pair — Ling Ling and Hsing Hsing —



ROBERT A. REEDER/The Washington Post

The National Zoo in Washington, D.C., has closed the Panda House to visitors to encourage Mei Xiang, left, and Tian Tian to mate. The pandas are in the fifth year of a 10-year loan from China, at a cost of \$1 million a year.

bred successfully four times and produced five cubs, but none lived longer than a few days. The only successful panda

breeding in the United States has happened at the San Diego Zoo, where two cubs have been reared.

STARS AND STRIPES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Those who deserve new badge

If the Army is going to create a Close Combat Badge, it needs to make sure that those involved in close combat receive it.

I have already heard much discussion about the proposed badge. I understand that the intent is for those regularly assigned to infantry-like duties in Iraq and Afghanistan to be recognized for what they do.

I also understand the differences between those military occupational specialties recognized by the Army in the proposed regulations and those soldiers regularly involved in the types of missions to which this badge is geared.

I was an air defense artillery battery commander in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, and my soldiers conducted alternate supply route, counter-reconnaissance, counter-ambush, counter-ambush, counter-imposed explosive device patrols, raids, searches, and a multitude of other infantry and cavalry missions. At the time, my commanders were not concerned about air threat and we were used as our abilities warranted in ground cavalry operations.

We were very successful. Some of my soldiers received Bronze Star Medals with "V" device for valor and Army Commendation Medals with "V" device for their service in close combat, where we regularly engaged the enemy with our direct-fire weapons systems.

My soldiers' MOSs didn't say cavalry, but everything else about them did. If it were going to be a Close Combat Badge, they deserve the recognition. I'm sure there are plenty of other commanders who feel the same about their soldiers.

Capt. Ben Metzler

Hohenfels, Germany

Sense of justice lost?

I watched with interest to see if there would be any letters to the editor objecting to the language used in "Dean's game hurts standing with party base" (column, Jack Kelly, Feb. 23): "As long as greed, stupidity and cowardice remain a part of the human condition, there will be a constituency for Democrats."

Is Kelly's ideology so skewed that the has

Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorial and columns that are published in the newspaper, and values letters on topics of importance in the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity.

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lost his sense of decency? No compassionate conservative here. Perhaps if the sentence had read, "As long as greed, stupidity and cowardice remain a part of the human condition, there will be constituency for Republicans," you would have gotten a reaction from the public.

I would also like to see more moderate-to-liberal editorials in Stars and Stripes. Not all of us out there are screaming, Bible-thumping conservatives.

Ellen Minette

Heidelberg, Germany

IRR story misleading

The story concerning the Individual Ready Reserve members called to active duty was a nice human interest article ("IRR delays hold up Army's empty war slots," article, Jan. 20); however, it came across as little misleading.

It stated that 5,600 were activated. Fact is, that was the number called up. Of that number, a much smaller amount were actually activated.

When I reported to Camp McGrady, Fort Jackson, S.C., they were expecting an iteration of 87 soldiers. Only 35 showed up, of which 25 were found medically fit.

We were told the low turnout was the

norm and when we asked what would happen to those who did not report, we were told that "it would be overwhelming for the Army to go after all those people."

Our inside joke was that we were "the few, the proud, the stupid" for reporting. Kidding aside, I am proud to serve, as are the others who did answer the call. I was in the National Guard for 13 years before getting out. Without any obligation, I voluntarily joined the IRR. I was told the IRR would only be called for an extreme emergency. The way I figured it, if by the time that that bad, I would be willing to serve.

A one-star made the comment, while eating at the chow hall at Camp McGrady, "The IRR is the third string and there is no one left on the bench." I am proud to have made it to the first string.

It is my opinion that the IRR system is seriously dysfunctional, which is a reflection on human resource centers. If it either needs to be managed competently or done away with.

Capt. Andy Timmerman

Baghdad

Paintball field in Iraq?

I appreciate all that Morale, Welfare and Recreation officials throughout Iraq provide us. Having said that, the Internet, pool tables and movies all are a bit sedentary for the average grunt's taste. The team sports are fine for those who have normal work schedules, but a grunt's schedule is anything but normal. I just think there's something missing.

I would ask the powers who decide such things to consider some new recreational activities. My first choice would be a modest paintball field on base. Political correctness aside, it's fun, physically active, and doesn't take a formal team to play. You can even call it a type of small-arms training if it helps with the budget decision. Fort Hood, Texas, has a paintball field, so I don't think the Army has a problem with them.

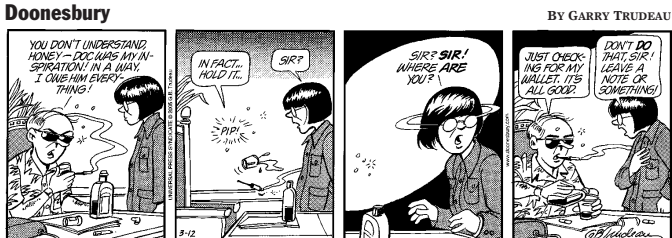
Best of all, it helps blow off some steam for the troops between patrols.

Throw in a few kayaks, rowboats and sell fishing tackle at the post exchange for the lake on base and you've got a great summer. Again, thanks to MWR for all it does.

Spc. Roger B. Rees

Camp Victory, Iraq

BY GARRY TRUDEAU



Mallard Fillmore



BY BRUCE TINSLEY

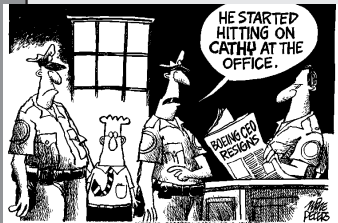
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Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



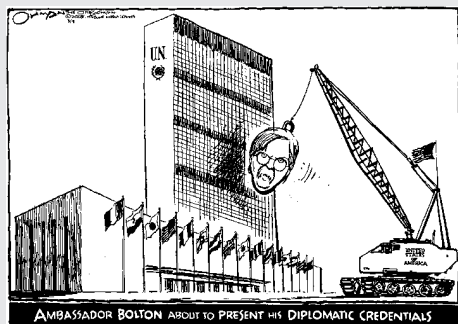
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Sickening swim

MI ROYAL OAK — More than 50 people were taken to a hospital after high levels of carbon monoxide were detected at a high school pool during swimming lessons, police said.

The children and adults fell ill inside Dorey High School in suburban Detroit. Doctors checked 35 people who complained of headaches, nausea and vomiting. Others left before being examined.

Five people were placed under increased pressure in the hospital's hyperbaric chamber to help them better absorb oxygen into their blood, said Dr. Frank McGeorge, director of emergency medicine at William Beaumont Hospital. They were released later in the day.

Royal Oak police Sgt. Barry Gale said tests had found high levels of carbon monoxide, which were believed to be caused by a malfunctioning furnace. The incident was still under investigation.

Indians fight dump

NV LAS VEGAS — An American Indian tribe filed a federal lawsuit aimed at stopping the government from building a national nuclear waste dump on ancestral land in Nevada.

Members of the Western Shoshone National Council cited a 19th-century treaty with the federal government that they said gives the tribe the right to stop the nuclear repository from being built at Yucca Mountain.

"Mother Earth is sacred to the Shoshone and is not to be hurt by us," Western Shoshone Chief Raymond Yowell said outside court. Nevada also is fighting the nuclear dump. It won a partial victory in a case last July that said the Energy Department's plan did not go far enough to protect people from potential radiation.

The department plans to entomb 77,000 tons of highly radioactive commercial, industrial and military waste at Yucca Mountain, 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

Cigarette smuggling

VA ROANOKE — Seven Californians who smuggled \$8.9 million worth of cheap Virginia cigarettes to the West Coast are scheduled to be sentenced in June.

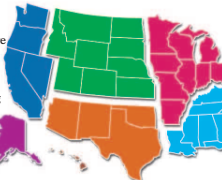
The seven pleas capped a four-year investigation involving local and federal officials, as well as agents from both states.

U.S. Attorney John Brownlee said leaders of the smuggling operation paid about \$8.9 million for more than 108 million cigarettes and had their accomplices truck them to California, where they were resold. The cigarettes had a retail value of more than \$18.5 million.

The scheme allowed the men to escape payment of more than \$4.7 million in California cigarette taxes. When the smuggling started, Virginia was taxing cigarettes at 2.5 cents a pack while California was assessing strokes at 87 cents a pack, said Sharon Burnham, an assistant U.S. attorney who prosecuted the case.

Man guilty in slashing

PA ALLENTOWN — A man accused of slashing a woman's throat and stabbing her after the two used drugs at a motel was convicted of attempted homicide.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Michael Leon Haley Sr., 48, of Allentown, was also found guilty of aggravated assault, reckless endangerment, making terroristic threats, and of theft for stealing a car after the incident.

Lisa Krephich, 33, said she and Haley were using drugs in the Lehigh Motor Inn in Upper Macungie Township on April 16 when he sliced her throat from ear to ear and repeatedly stabbed her. She said she ran from the room and collapsed.

Krephich said she had met Haley just hours earlier and had taken him to a house to get drugs before going with him to the motel.

Assisted suicide botched

OR PORTLAND — A terminally ill cancer patient who tried to end his life with drugs prescribed under Oregon's assisted-suicide law awoke three days later, alert and talkative, his wife said.

David Prueitt, who had lung cancer, took what was believed to be a fatal dose of a barbiturate prescribed by his doctor in January.

He fell into a coma within minutes, but woke up three days later, said his wife, Lynda Romig Prueitt.

Prueitt's wife told The Oregonian newspaper that he asked, "Why am I not dead?"

Prueitt, 42, lived for two more weeks before dying of natural causes at his Estacada home.

The state Department of Human Services will turn the case over to



Cowboy cleanup

Ralph Reinhardt of Voecker Construction does a last-minute clean-up on the face of a huge cowboy sign on the grounds of the Travis County Expo Center in Austin, Texas.

the Board of Medical Examiners or state Board of Pharmacy to determine if the procedure or drugs were faulty, said Dr. Katrina Hedberg, assistant state epidemiologist.

Parties feuding

MT HELENA — Leading Republicans in the Legislature fumed after meeting with Democratic Gov. Brian Schweitzer, who criticized them for opposing some of his key legislation, then left without giving them a chance to speak. House Republican Leader Roy Brown said he and others went to the governor's office for "a legitimate discussion about issues" and ended up listening to "a show." Schweitzer said later he thought he gave Republicans opportunity to comment.

Bad morning wake-up

FL MIAMI — Instead of an early-bird customer, a cafeteria worker discovered a live grenade on a counter where people typically order coffee and doughnuts.

The Opportunity Cafeteria had just opened about 6:30 a.m. when the unidentified worker found the grenade on one corner of the counter. Police officers were summoned and determined that the grenade was active, with its pin still in place.

The department's bomb squad took the grenade to a secure location and detonated it, according to a statement from the police department. No one was injured and there was no damage to any structures.

Investigators were trying Tuesday to determine how the grenade got there. No other devices were found at the cafeteria.

Police did not immediately return a call seeking additional information.

Heartland losing kids

ND BISMARCK — Tony Niemman is going to miss the shrieks and laughter coming from the school playground.

Starting this fall, the 25 elementary-age children will go somewhere else to learn their ABCs. There just aren't enough of them to keep the school open.

The town of Calvin, where Niemman is mayor, exemplifies what is happening all across North Dakota: Young adults and young families with children are moving away to escape the harsh farm economy.

New census figures show North Dakota is losing more children than any other state.

"What we're seeing is a tremendous loss of youth," said Richard Rathge, director of the State Data Center. "Young adults and young families are leaving and taking their children with them."

From 2000 to 2004, North Dakota's population of children ages 5 to 17 dropped about 14 percent and the number of newborns dropped about 8 percent, the Census Bureau said in a report being released Thursday. The number of newborns in one year alone, 2003 to 2004, dropped 15 percent — and the highest percentage in the nation.

But Rathge said North Dakota's birth rate has declined nearly every year since 1982. Fargo, the state's largest city, has seen a 1.5 percent growth in young people over the past few years, but most of them are not starting families, he said.



A berry good cause

Jimmy Webb, a graduate student majoring in horticulture at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences in Gainesville, Fla., displays strawberries that are being sold to raise funds for the institute's student organization. The berries were donated to the student group by growers in Plant City, Fla.



Seeking seashells and sun

Nackie Karcher hunts for seashells on Miami Beach, Fla., near 12th Street after a cold front brought rain and wind to the area.



You quack me up!

Four-year-olds, from left, Isabela Martinez-Vazquez, Chloe Craft, and Riley Buchanan from the St. John's Child Development Center in Anderson, S.C., watch a duckling waddle around a dish of food. The children had a difficult time naming the waddling duck, which explains its new name: Sallymadelinequackquack.



Swinging in Las Vegas

Employees and members of the media try out "Insanity," a new ride that dangles riders 1,149 feet over the Las Vegas Boulevard strip over the side of the Stratosphere Tower in Las Vegas.



Taking his licks

contents of a plastic spoon.

A squirrel in a tree on Donham Plaza in Middletown, Ohio, cleans up the leftover



A real nail-biter

Bianca Ulloa of Rio Bravo Middle School ponders the spelling of a word during the first round of the 61st annual Spelling Bee at the 61st National Memorial Theatre in El Paso, Texas. The winner will participate in the Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee in Washington.



Spring attraction

Cliff Buza walks among poppies along Zionsmountain Road in El Paso, Texas. The Mexican gold poppies that bloom on the lower slopes of the Franklin Mountains in the northeast part of the city draw a large number of visitors.

TV contract questioned

NV CARSON CITY — A state senator is defending her \$3,000-a-month contract to consult with a television station on news content, including issues in the Legislature.

Sen. Barbara Cegavske, R-Las Vegas, said during a joint budget committee hearing that she works for Sunbelt Communications, which owns KVBC of Las Vegas. She said she has worked with the station about a year and helps with stories about education, health care and, sometimes, the Nevada Legislature.

"I'm a consultant," she told the Las Vegas Sun. "They'll call me about different issues, ask me questions about health or education issues."

Al Tompkins, a television consultant and faculty member at the Poynter Institute, a journalism think tank, said he had never heard of a legislator contracting with a news outlet while in office.

"Can you imagine a newspaper employing a member of Congress?" he asked.

Cegavske said she disclosed the relationship several times during interim finance committee hearings before the legislative session, and ran the idea past her own attorney.

Thieves take cane, purse

NY BREWSTER — A 42-year-old woman and her two sons were arrested, accused of robbing an elderly woman of her purse and cane in the parking lot of a supermarket, State Police said.

Susan Blaney, Stephen Blaney, 22, and Michael Blaney, 23, drove up to woman and one son stole her cane and purse as she was making her way to her car, Investigator Paul Hasselmann said.

The Blaneys struck a parked car and tried to run down a pedestrian as they fled, authorities said. Their vehicle was spotted later in Kent and they were arrested.

The Blaneys were each charged with second-degree robbery and two counts each of first-degree reckless endangerment, police said.

Doubling up on blood

PA HOWARD — A blood drive in Centre County used new techniques to boost the supply as the number of blood donors nationally continues to decline.

The new "double red cell" collection requires donors to give twice as much blood. A device separates red blood cells, plasma and platelets — keeping only the blood cells and sending the plasma and platelets back into the donor.

The result: Two pints of red blood cells, double that of a traditional blood draw. The procedure will help increase the stockpile of available blood when blood reserves are critically low, said Steve Campbell of the Red Cross.

Rampage ends in death

TX HOUSTON — A man who wounded two people and attempted three carjackings was shot and killed by police after taking a hostage and shooting at that man, Houston police said.

It began when the gunman was caught burglarizing an apartment, police said. A maintenance man who confronted him was shot in the side, said police.

The gunman then tried to take a man's car at a red light. The driver grabbed his keys and abandoned the truck, leaving the gunman.

The gunman then ran into Action Electronics where he tried to carjack the owner, police said. The owner was shot in the leg.

The gunman ran into a neighborhood, where he found a man in a truck. The gunman took that man hostage, police said. Ignoring commands to drop his weapon, the gunman began shooting at his hostage, police said. The gunman was then shot and killed by the officer.

Woman killed by dogs

VA PARTLOW — An 83-year-old woman was attacked in her yard by a pack of pit bulls and died of her injuries en route to the hospital, police said.

One dog was killed by sheriff's deputies, one was captured and the third remained on the loose after the attack on Dorothy Sullivan, who was found by her daughter.

Investigators believe the dogs have two owners, and one has been located. While no charges have been filed, the owners could possibly be accused of involuntary manslaughter, he said.

Tour boats seized

HA HONOLULU — Two tour boats owned by Dream Cruises were seized by the U.S. Marshals Service because the company was in default of a \$1.4 million mortgage on the vessels, according to officials and court documents.

The American Dream in Kewalo Basin and its sister ship, the Kona Dream in Kona, won't be allowed to operate until court proceedings are completed, a spokesman for the service said.

Dream Cruises President Michael Watson acknowledged being a couple months late on payments, but said he was in discussions with the lender for a new payment plan.

Conviction overturned

CA SAN FRANCISCO — A federal appeals court tossed out the conviction of a death row inmate because prosecutors knowingly lied about a deal that had been struck with a key witness in the case.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals cleared the way for a new trial for Blufford Hayes Jr., who was convicted in 1981 of murdering a Stockton hotel manager and sentenced to death for first-degree murder, burglary and robbery.

The key witness, A.J. James, said Hayes confided to him shortly after the murder that he had "offed" Vinod "Pete" Patel. James also helped Hayes steal several cartons of cigarettes from the hotel lobby.

James was the only witness who could corroborate the burglary charge — adding the "special circumstances" needed to make it a death penalty case.

Court papers show the prosecutor negotiated a deal with James' attorney to grant him immunity in the murder and to drop all other pending felony charges.

The two also agreed to hide the deal from the judge and jury — and from James as well, so he did not perjure himself on the witness stand if asked whether he'd been given any special treatment in exchange for his testimony.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Outragious for all ages

Actor Alan Cumming enjoys roles that appeal to lighter side

BY NANCY MILLS
New York Daily News

HOLLYWOOD

Later this month, as befits an international star of stage and screen, Alan Cumming will launch his own fragrance. Cumming.

"Originally it was for men," he says, "but women love it. So I'm saying it's beyond gender."

It's also beyond the age of the target audience for "Son of the Mask," a sort of prequel to Jim Carrey's 1994 "The Mask." Released in the States on Feb. 18, the film brought in about \$16 million in its first three weeks.

Cumming plays Loki, the Norse God of Mischief, who created the

mask and now will go to any length — and any disguise — to get it back. No costume or hair style is too demeaning, if it gets a laugh.

"Sometimes people get really snuffy about the films you choose if you've done more dramatic projects or you're classically trained," says Cumming, who studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Dance.

"But I love a film where I get squished by two Dumpsters or I fly through the air."

The outrageous Cumming has a career that goes both ways. His heavyweight credits include "Cabaret," his Tony Award-winning revival in 1998, and heavy dramas such as "Eyes Wide Shut" (1999).

Then there's the more mainstream "Enigma" (opposite Gwyneth Paltrow), "X2" and TV versions of "Annie" and "The Goodbye Girl." Kids flock to him because of "Spy Kids," "The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas" and "Black Beauty."

"What I really liked about 'Son of the Mask' was the homage to Looney Tunes and 'One Froggy Evening,'" Cumming, 40, says. "Kids are more genuine. When they come up and want to talk to you, they don't have an agenda. It's more endearing and less piercing to your aura."

Cumming is "like a finely-tuned Rolls Royce," says "Son of the Mask" director Lawrence Guterman. "He exudes such confidence as he chews up the scenery."

He chews more scenery in "Reefer Madness," a musical airing on Showtime in April. In a parody of the 1936 anti-marijuana film, he plays the emcee-like Lecturer, President Roosevelt and Goat-Man.

"I thought it was a funny story," he says. "What our film is saying is that we're encouraged to be scared about certain things — in the movie it's marijuana, which is not very scary at all. But it takes up all your energy and you don't worry about the really important things that are going on."

After President Bush's re-election, Cumming thought about leaving America and New York, where he has lived since 1998 (and "Cabaret").

But he decided he had too many commitments here.

He's already at work on "Bam Bam and Celeste," in which he plays Margaret Cho's love interest. After that comes "X3," reprising his role as the shape shifter Nightcrawler.

Then there are more films to promote: "Mr. Ripley's Return," "Neverwas," "Ant Bully," "Eighteen," and "Wedding Photo," in which he plays a 1920s Minnesota farmer with 10 children.

Cumming enjoys toying with gender issues. He was married for eight years to Hilary Lyon, his *Orpheus* in "Hamlet." In 2002, he wrote a novel, "Tommy's Tale," about the wild life of a pansexual Londoner.

Currently, he speaks about having a boyfriend.

His fragrance's advertising campaign features postcards of Cumming doing homages to old fragrance ads.

"In some of them I'm naked," he says. "I sent the postcards to my mom, and she sent me an e-mail, saying ... 'I wasn't shocked because 40 years ago I saw you just as naked — but everything was a bit smaller.'"

Jagger sex footage banned

A British judge banned the broadcast of video footage showing Elizabeth Jagger engaging in "sexual activities" with her boyfriend in a nightclub.

Jagger, daughter of Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall, sought the injunction against John Darlington, manager of Kabaret's Prophecy Nightclub in London.

High Court Judge Roger Bell ruled Wednesday that Jagger, 20, and boyfriend Calum Best, son of former soccer star George Best, had a "legitimate expectation of privacy" when they engaged in sexual activities just inside the club's doors on Feb. 17. The couple were captured on a closed-circuit television camera that they had failed to notice.



Jagger

R&B singer Levert indicted

A Cuyahoga County, Ohio, grand jury indicted Gerald Levert on assault charges in a confrontation with police during a traffic stop last month.

Earlier this month, prosecutor Anthony Jordan said there was no evidence the R&B singer caused serious physical harm to

patrolmen Ronald W. Ross and Daniel Lentz.

Levert, 38, was charged with drunken driving, impeding traffic, obstructing police business and resisting arrest.

On Tuesday, a grand jury indicted Levert on two charges of felonious assault and a charge of obstructing official business.

Police said Levert and a passenger in his car intervened when authorities stopped a friend of Levert for speeding at 12:45 a.m. Feb. 25.

Levert is the son of Eddie Levert, a founding member of The O'Jays, a longtime R&B group. Gerald Levert became lead singer of the trio Levert in 1985. He began his solo recording career in 1991.



Gerald Levert

Jackson's 'second life' after crash

Reggie Jackson feels he's on a "second life" after surviving a car crash last week in which his vehicle flipped over several times in Florida.

The Hall of Famer, a New York Yankees special adviser and spring training instructor, was treated at a hospital and released after his sport utility vehicle was struck from behind Friday night.

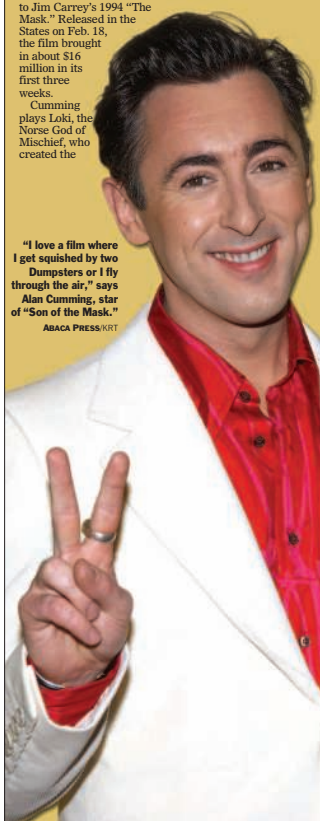
"You wonder why you survived," Jackson, 58, said Tuesday.

"I've struggled more emotionally. Now I have a second life. I've been blessed again. Thank God for having a hand on my shoulder. I just thank God I had my seat belt on."

Jackson is stiff and sore, has several cuts on his head and bruises caused by his seat belt. The driver of the other car, Miguel Angel Rivera, 34, of Temple Terrace, Fla., remained hospitalized Tuesday but is improving and will recover from his injuries, Tampa police spokesman Joe Durkin said.

"I feel a lot better," Jackson said. "Let me tell you, when the doctor and nurse told me I could go home and there were no internal injuries, I felt as good as when I hit the three homers," he added, a reference to his performance in Game 6 of the 1977 World Series.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



"I love a film where I get squished by two Dumpsters or I fly through the air," says Alan Cumming, star of "Son of the Mask."

ABACA PRESS/KRT

OWS

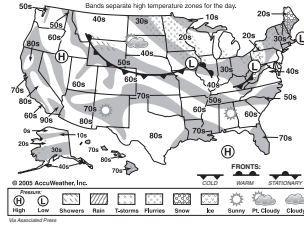
Operational Weather Squadron home
page at:
<https://ows.sembach.af.mil>
<http://ows.public.sembach.af.mil>

[illegible]

Sunrise (Baghdad)	6:17AM	6:16
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	6:46AM	6:44
Sunset (Baghdad)	6:08PM	6:09
Sunset (Frankfurt)	6:26PM	6:27

			
First qtr.	Full moon	Last qtr.	New moon

100



ARTY

Check our Relocation Guide
every Saturday to find
Realtors at your new station.

STARS AND STRIPES®
Your Hometown Newspaper

Horoscope

The position of Mars indicates a flare of fireworks between people who are normally in agreement. The issue is power—who has it, really? The roles are reversed, and the choice in life come with both limitations and perks. Suddenly, the perks may not seem to balance with the limitations, and adjustments are indicated. Don't rush to conclusions.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(March 12). You quickly learn how to attract all you need. Financial success comes from wheeling and dealing and putting yourself out there. April marks the beginning of life minus a bad habit. Educational and civic pursuits connect you with friendships and romance this summer. June brings a change of location. Love signs are Sagittarius and Taurus.

ARIES (March 21-April 19).

Smart thinking rules your day. You're so resourceful that you find uses for things you never thought you would use—like the Christmas present you received that just wasn't for you or the phone number of your ex.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

The theme is the kindness of strangers. You'll be the benefactor and the recipient of such considerations. And you'll feel a special kinship with that person who is full of intriguing things— you could use more of this influence.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

Issues of equality arise between loved ones. You'll be feeling out the balance of power and realizing its delicacy. Is there nobility in loving someone who depends on you and solely needs your love?

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

Your artistic side emerges as the hero of the day—others are honored by your grand portrayal of them through your art. Don't underestimate the value of silliness. Singles have hot dates tonight.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

You feel a little bit naughty. The day plays out like a spicy game of Truth or Dare. Aquarius and Gemini are

your allies. You'll be ecstatic with financial arrangements that involve a Scorpio.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

You're mindful of other people's feelings, but issues arise that even you are not sure how to tactfully approach. Focus on you—find your inner peace. The answer is blowing in the breeze.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

The stars line up to enforce the belief that it's good to be you. Just sit down, and count the ways! The reward: You complete your daily tasks with a flourish, as if to say, "Ain't life grand?"

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

You're the teller. You may need to point out the obvious to an oblivious individual, but this move will eventually make your life easier. Passing the blame, however, would only make you look bad.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

There's genius in imperfection. Something broken gives you a fantastic idea or produces a fortuitous meeting that wouldn't have happened otherwise. Some of you will receive start-up cash for your idea.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

When diplomacy is needed, you're as smooth as Bill Clinton. If you're single: A beautiful stranger adds spice to your life. If in a couple: Your strength is your ability to form your opinion instead of echoing a partner's views.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

Depend on intuition when your affections are concerned. Get over a fear of being the "bad guy" and having a difficult conversation—avoiding that conversation only makes you the "bad guy."

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

An undecided issue could have you walking around in the daze of a quandary. Getting more opinions only confuses the matter. Don't worry: You cannot make a mistake and miss your fate. This fate is inextricably bound to you.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



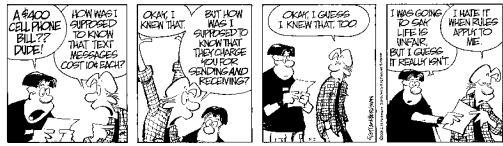
Calvin and Hobbes



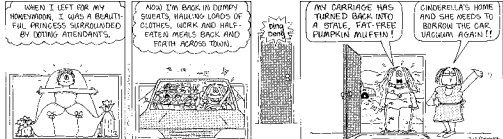
Jump Start



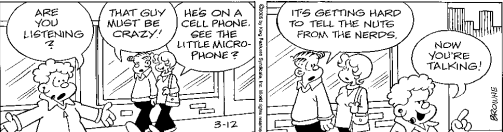
Zits



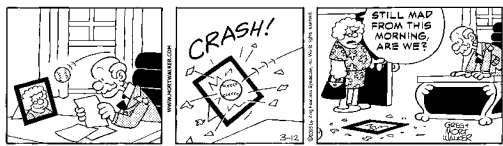
Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



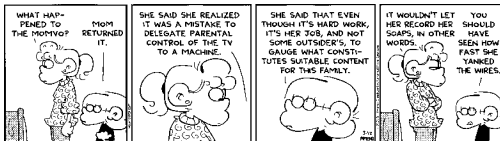
Better or Worse



Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



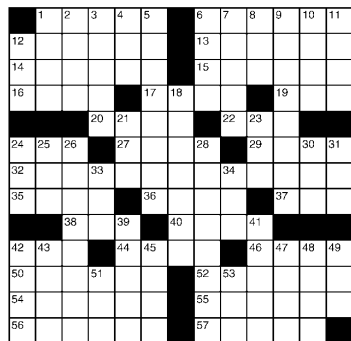
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Sew temporarily
6 Weak, in a way
12 Shrek's companion
13 Adjoining
14 Author Gordimer
15 Decrease
16 Seed coat
17 Propagated
19 Took a meeting
20 Maltese money
22 — Paulo
24 Upsilon follower
27 Georgia city
29 — it out (come to blows)
32 They're "pieciful"
35 Faxed
36 Rani's wraparound
37 Pismire
38 Popeye's Olive
40 All-in-black rock fan
42 Listener
44 Texas sch.
46 Dumbfounded
50 Quick look
52 Swindle
54 Family subdivisions
55 Inquisitive
56 Large bird dog
57 Fits like matryoshka dolls
- 2 "... — can't get up!"
3 Dexterity
4 Pinchleaf card
5 Some are penciled in
6 Competent
7 Can't do without
8 Curvy letter
9 Montana city
10 Concept
11 Minimal change
12 "CSI" evidence
18 Rush wildly about
21 George's brother
23 Wood-shaping tool
24 Nightwear, for short
25 Waste not a moment
26 Uninformed
- 28 Certain hotel plan
30 "Jeopardy!" juggernaut Jennings
31 Superlative ending
33 Home for 1-Down
34 Teen's woe
39 Moolah
41 Uses another's password, maybe
42 Diner supply
43 Sheltered
45 Wardrobe malfunction
47 Teensiest part
48 Sea flock
49 Diploma datum (Abbr.)
51 Trawler equipment
53 Work with

Answer to Previous Puzzle



Down

- 1 Papa porker

3-12

CRYPTOQUIP

L PCXXIPG FIC OLDNM ESKK
MNG XGHPV LV ENSHDG
IR S HIUGHF MNG

EIOOSVZGH-LV-MNLGR.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU DECIDE TO PURCHASE YOUR OWN HORSE, YOU WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE TO PONY UP.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals B

'Other woman' upset over rejection

Dear Abby: I am an independent VIP escort — 48 years old, although I look 10 years younger than my age. I have grown kids who don't know what I do.

One of my clients, a married doctor, was very kind to me. He confided that he and his wife hadn't made love in 10 years and were only living parallel lives. We enjoyed each other so much we started having dinner dates. When I told him I wanted to get out of the business, he offered to help.

He leased a beautiful apartment for me not far from his office and gave me a small job I could do from home until I found work. I then saw him exclusively. We discussed marriage, and I never really looked for work, assuming that we would be together.

After four months, I convinced him to call his wife and let her about our relationship, figuring she would be so angry she'd

divorce him. Now he says he won't support me anymore and won't see me, either. They are in counseling! I want to contact him. I know he wants me because we were so good together. But I'm afraid of rejection. What should I do?

— Castaway in Paterson, N.J.

Dear Abby



Dear Castaway: I have a short "to-do" list for you:

1. Wake up and smell the coffee. The doctor has made his choice, and it's not you.
2. Find a legitimate job so you won't have to hide from your kids, because, sister, you're on your own.

Dear Abby: All of

my friends have a special pet that sticks to them like glue. I'm talking about a "waiting-at-the-door-until-they-get-home-from-school" kind of pet.

I have two dogs and two cats. Buttons and Bamboo are my two dogs, and Jasmine and Midnight

are my two cats.

Buttons likes my grandfather; Bamboo likes my mom, and my cats can't come inside.

I asked my parents if I could have another pet, a pet of my own that would stick only by MY side. They looked at each other and said, "OK, if you get rid of the ones you love!" But I love all of them, Abby. I can't bear to give any of them away. What should I do?

— Lonely Girl in Fort Smith

Dear Lonely Girl: Instead of getting yet another pet, it's time for you to take a more active part in the lives of the ones you already have. Make it your job to feed them. When you return from school, make some special time to take the dogs out, exercise them and play with them.

Once it becomes routine, they'll look forward to their special time with you and be excited when you get home.

Letters for this column — with your name and home number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles 40, 90069. Readers can e-mail at http://www.usexpress.com/dearabby Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VENOL

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BUMIE

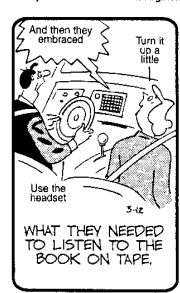
FLUWEE

EMVOIT

www.jumble.com

A:

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argiron



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TOXIN FOYER MORBID ENOUGH

Answer: When the judge presided over the long trial, he — FOUND IT 'TRYING'

Allow family to get past grief

Dear Annie: Two years ago, my husband passed away very suddenly at the age of 38. While he was in the hospital, his family verbally attacked me regarding where he should be buried. They thought he should be with them, in his hometown, 2,500 miles away from me and our three young children.

I decided to have him cremated and planned to give his parents some of his ashes. Later, however, I thought it would be too confusing for our children, having Daddy in two different states, so ultimately, I kept his ashes with me. I figured I would reconsider sharing his ashes when the children are older.

My husband's family was so upset, they left before the funeral service without saying goodbye. We didn't hear from any of them until his mom called months later, saying mean and hurtful things.

I feel so sad for our children. They not only lost their father,

Annie's Mailbox



but his whole family, too. They abandoned us when we really needed their support.

I know everyone grieves differently, but I am having a hard time understanding how my in-laws could cut their grandchildren out of their lives. They still acknowledge special occasions, and we are very appreciative, but that's it.

Dear Widow: Try to understand this from your in-laws' point of view and imagine the devastation of losing a child. The fact that their son was an adult does not diminish the pain and grief. We don't expect you to forget, but please forgive them for their unkind words. They are still hurting. Maintain whatever contact is comfortable. Send occasional photographs of the children, perhaps with a short note letting them know how the kids are doing. We hope, with the passage of time, that the wounds will heal and they will become closer.

Dear Annie: Could you please print this, so the movie and television industry will consider putting closed captioning on all of their productions? There are many, many people who are hearing impaired. Going to a movie theater is no pleasure when we have no idea what people are saying. I know they play the sound very loud, but that doesn't help because the background noise overwhelms the dialogue.

Those TV programs that have captioning are truly appreciated, and I don't bother tuning in to those that don't. Help me get this message across.

— Wisconsin Reader

Dear Wisconsin: As the Boomers age, hearing loss will become more common. It would be sensible for the industry to pay close attention to your letter.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



3-12

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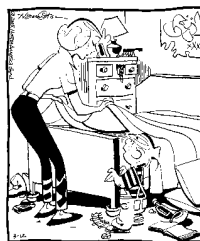
"A real one, or just somebody wearing a funny suit and a painted face?"

GRAFFITI

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES IS MOSTLY DONE BY BILL COLLECTORS

MBA 3/12

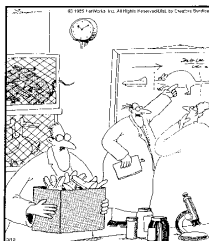
Domis the Menace



"MISS WILSON SAYS SHE'S PUSHIN' SEVENTY. DOES THAT MEAN I'M PUSHIN' SIX?"

© Gary Larson

The Far Side



Feb. 27, 1907: The duck-billed platypus is invented.

Non Sequitur



"HEY-Y-Y, NONI! THAT YOU HEARDEN IT, AN' WE'VE BEEN DROPPIN' GAY RANTINGS ABOUT THIS EITHER..."

"BOB, LEARNIN' THAT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW CAN KILL YOU"

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Scilling to attend congressional hearing

BY RONALD BLUM

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Curt Scilling plans to attend next week's congressional hearing on steroid use in baseball, becoming the first current player to agree to testify before the panel.

Speaking at Boston's spring training camp in Fort Myers, Fla., the Red Sox ace said Friday that he has "nothing" to offer the panel.

"I'm still real confused as to why I was put in this group and why there are others players that aren't in this group," Scilling said.

The commissioner's office has said it will fight the subpoenas, which also were issued to Jason Giambi, Sammy Sosa, Frank Thomas and Rafael Palmeiro. Former players Jose Canseco and Mark McGwire also were summoned for the March 17 hearing of House Government Reform Committee along with three management officials and union head Donald Fehr.

Canseco asked Thursday for immunity if he's to testify fully before the committee, but a spokesman for the lawmaker who will chair the proceeding offered no promises.

Another House panel on Thursday held the first of what it said could be a series of hearings on the subject, with several congressmen chastising baseball for what one called its "extremely weak" drug-testing program. The subcommittee chairman said all major U.S. sports leagues should work toward uniform steroid penalties.

Canseco seeking immunity for testimony



Canseco



Scilling

"I don't think it's grandstanding," New York Yankees player representative Mike Mussina said. "I think in light of what's happened the last year or so maybe, people are looking for some answers. The public wants to get some answers, so they're trying to find some answers."

Canseco, the 1988 AL MVP, has admitted using performance-enhancing drugs and his best-selling book accused several stars of steroid use.

"We've asked for immunity," said Canseco's lawyer, Robert Saunooke. "We hope they give it to us. We're still going to show up even if we have no immunity and offer whatever testimony we can that does not expose Jose to legal liability."

David Marin, a spokesman for committee chairman Tom Davis, said, "At this point, there are no plans to offer immunity to any witness."

Henry Waxman, the committee's ranking Democrat, said he would not be opposed to immunity. He sees the hearing as a chance to find out about the role of steroids in the majors and to address the effect on young athletes, not to expose whether individual players used the drugs.

"With all the reports we've had in the past decade — Major League Baseball has refused to investigate," Waxman said. "Now with the great interest in the subject because of Jose Canseco's book, and people who said they did and did not use steroids, it's brought things to a head."

Players were in the process of hiring lawyers and deciding whether to act jointly or individually.

McGwire's spokesman, Marc Altieri, said his client hasn't decided whether to appear. Thomas, at spring training in Arizona, said, "If it happens, I'll go. It's not a problem."

Also summoned were union head Donald Fehr, baseball executive vice presidents Rob Manfred and Sandy Alderson, and San Diego General Manager Kevin Towers. Fehr and Manfred will appear; Towers said Thursday he wasn't sure.

On Wednesday, baseball lawyer Stanley Brand said the committee had no jurisdiction and was interfering with a San Francisco federal grand jury investigation involving steroids. Davis and Waxman re-

sponded Thursday, sending Brand a letter stating "your legal analysis is flawed. ... Any failure to comply with the committee's subpoenas would be unwise and irresponsible."

No players were invited to Thursday's Energy and Commerce Committee hearing, where chairman Joe Barton said his panel might issue subpoenas for commissioners of the major sports leagues.

Barton said use of performance-enhancing drugs is tainting sports, noting that as San Francisco Giants slugger Barry Bonds pursues the career home run record there are questions about whether he's been aided by steroids.

Waxman said Bonds, who wouldn't comment Thursday, wasn't among the players asked to appear because "the feeling was that if he were invited, all the attention would go to Barry Bonds and would distract from the overall mission of the hearing."

In Fort Myers, six of 12 players on the World Series champion Boston Red Sox were tested for steroids Thursday. Players from several other teams already have been tested under the tougher program baseball and players agreed to in January under pressure from Congress. The agreement, which has not been finalized, calls for 10-day suspensions for first-time offenders.

AP sports writers Howard Kendrick in Washington, Mike Fitzpatrick in Tampa, Fla., Janie McCauley in Scottsdale, Ariz., Howard Ulman in Fort Myers, Fla., and Bernie Wilson in San Diego contributed to this report.

Cubs' Prior makes first start of spring

The Associated Press

Mark Prior gave the Cubs some good news on the day ace Kerry Wood went back to Chicago to have his right shoulder examined.

The Cincinnati Reds and St. Louis Cardinals were all smiles after stars Ken Griffey Jr. and Larry Walker took their first swings in spring training games.

Prior, slated to be the Cubs' No. 2 starter behind Wood, gave up a run and four hits in three innings in a 5-3 victory over the Seattle Mariners on Thursday.

Wood, meanwhile, returned to Chicago for tests on his pitching shoulder. A day earlier, he cut short his start after feeling tightness. Wood had an MRI before heading home.

"He's such a valuable commodity," Cubs manager Dusty Baker said.

Wood missed two months last season because of tendinitis in his right triceps. He was sidelined for the 1999 season after elbow ligament replacement surgery.

"After what happened last year, this is just precautionary," Baker said. "It was just a matter of him going back and seeing our team doctor. Right now, it's nothing. We just decided to do this for a precautionary measure."

The Cubs are being cautious with Prior this spring because last season he didn't pitch until



Chicago Cubs starter Mark Prior delivers in the first inning against the Seattle Mariners on Thursday.

June 4. A month after he returned from the right Achilles' tendinitis injury, Prior missed a start in July with discomfort in his pitching elbow.

Prior didn't have any nagging thoughts about getting injured this season.

"Sometimes things creep up, but you can't worry about it," he said. "You definitely don't want to see anybody get hurt. You want to see the best guys out there, you want to play the best and you want to be at your best."

At Sarasota, Fla., Griffey hit a sharp liner directly into first baseman Carlos Pena's glove in his first at-bat of the spring.

"I said to him, 'I haven't had a base hit since July, you could have let that one go by,'" Griffey said.

Actually, Griffey's last hit was on Aug. 4, and his final game of



Cincinnati Reds designated hitter Ken Griffey Jr. grounds out in his first at-bat of the spring training season on Thursday. The Reds received permission to use Griffey as a designated hitter at home games this spring.

2004 was two days later. Griffey has been sidelined by serious injuries each of the last four seasons. He had surgery Aug. 16 to reattach his torn right hamstring.

In his second and last at-bat of the Reds' 4-3 win over the Detroit Tigers, Griffey walked.

"We just wanted to get him two at-bats the first time out of the chute," Reds manager Dave Miley said. "Tomorrow we'll shoot for three."

At Jupiter, Fla., Walker was hitless in two at-bats and played four innings in the Cardinals' 4-2 victory over the Houston Astros.

Walker was limited since the start of spring training by lower back soreness, but he said he probably could have played four days earlier.

"I felt great," Walker said. "Got a couple of balls hit to me, so I was able to move. And I hit the ball all right my first time up. I felt comfortable, felt all right."

At Phoenix, Ben Sheets, who had offseason back surgery, made his spring debut and pitched a scoreless inning in the Milwaukee Brewers' 6-4 loss to the Kansas City Royals. Scheduled to throw one inning or 25 pitches, Sheets

needed just 12 pitches to retire the side in the first.

At Fort Myers, Fla., Scott Erickson improved his bid for the No. 5 spot in the Los Angeles Dodgers' rotation with four strong innings in their 2-1 win over the Boston Red Sox.

The 37-year-old Erickson had his third straight solid outing, allowing one run and two hits while striking out five and walking one. In nine innings of spring training, he's allowed one run and three hits with six strikeouts and two walks. The only run he allowed Thursday came on Manny Ramirez's second homer.

Miller poised to be king of the slopes

After winning World Cup super-G crown, American on verge of taking overall title

The Associated Press

LENZERHEIDE, Switzerland — **Bode Miller** tied with American teammate **Daron Rahvles** to win the final super-G of the season on Friday, virtually wrapping up the overall World Cup title.

Miller increased his overall World Cup lead to 184 points over Benjamin Raich of Austria, who finished 11th in Friday's race.

It was Miller's first World Cup victory since a slalom at Sestriere, Italy, on Dec. 13, and it ended Hermann Maier's pursuit of the World Cup super-G title.

The Austrian started the day with a 54-point lead over Miller in the super-G standings. Miller and Maier were the final two skiers down the course.

After Miller finished even with Rahvles in 1 minute, 10.24 seconds, Maier needed three more seconds to secure the title. He was ninth.

"I really had my heart set on that," said Miller, who became the first American to win the super-G title since the discipline was introduced in 1986. "It was matter of Hermann more than me. I did my part and then all I could do was watch him. He made a mistake in the middle and that was it."

Miller, who finished 17 points ahead of Maier in the final super-G standings, said he was helped by a course report from Rahvles, who won his first race of the season.

"I put down an amazingly aggressive run today," Rahvles said.

Sports briefs

In the overall standings, Miller leads Raich 1,528 points to 1,344.

The only way Miller can lose the overall title is if Raich wins the remaining two races — Saturday's giant slalom and Sunday's slalom — and the American finishes outside the top 15 both days.

"There are still 200 points up for grabs," Miller said. "It's never over until it's mathematically over. Benni can win both events, so I need to ski well."

Miller is bidding to become the first American to win an overall title since Phil Mahre and Tamara McKinney in 1983.

Dorfmeister wins super-G title

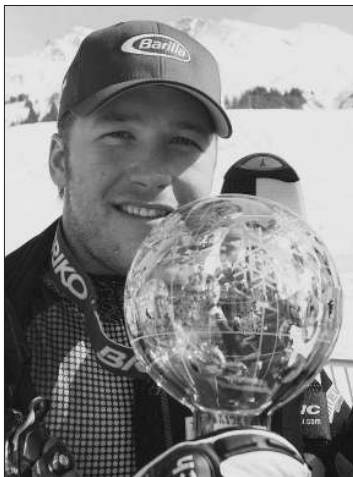
LENZERHEIDE, Switzerland — Austria's Michaela Dorfmeister won the final super-G giant slalom of the season on Friday, capturing the World Cup title in the discipline.

Sweden's Anja Paerson extended her lead over Croatia's Janica Kostelic in the overall standings with a third-place finish.

Dorfmeister, the 2001-02 overall winner, won the giant slalom title in 1999 and 2000 and the downhill crown in 2003.

Lindsey Kildow of the United States placed fourth on Friday and finished third in the super-G standings.

Paerson leads Kostelic by 89 points with Saturday's slalom and Sunday's giant slalom remaining. Victorias are worth 100 points.



Bode Miller, above, is the first American to win the World Cup super-G title since the discipline was introduced in 1986. With a 184-point lead entering the final two races, Miller is poised to become the first American to win an overall title since Phil Mahre and Tamara McKinney in '83.

First player arrested in German soccer scandal

FRANKFURT, Germany — A third-division soccer player suspected of helping to rig a game and threatening a witness was arrested Friday in Germany's game-fixing scandal.

Steffen Karl, a player for Chemnitz, became the first player to be arrested since the scandal broke in January. He was held on suspicion of fraud, plotting a crime and coercion, according to a statement by a district court in Berlin.

In addition to allegedly helping fix a game in May 2004, Karl is suspected of offering a bribe to the goalkeeper of another club to fix a second-division game. The goalkeeper refused and reported receiving threats.

Karl's arrest came one day after a second referee, Dominik Marks, was ordered held in investigative custody on suspicion of fixing three games.

Berlin prosecutors are investigating 25 people, including 14 players and four referees, on suspicion of manipulating at least 10 games, mostly in lower divisions.

Campbell fires 64 in chilly Florida

The Associated Press

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — **Chad Campbell** warmed up as the weather did.

The burly Texan overcame a slow start in chilly, windy conditions

Golf roundup

Thursday to shoot an 8-under-par 64 and take a two-stroke lead after the opening round of the Honda Classic.

Campbell began on the back nine shortly after 7 a.m. EST, when temperatures were in the 50s, and bogeyed Nos. 10 and 16. He holed a 70-yard shot on the par-5 17th for eagle, then followed with six birdies on the front nine.

Half of the 144-player field at the Country Club at Mirasol finished before noon. Among those early starters, only Campbell shot better than 69, a reflection of the conditions.

"We were joking that maybe they let him on the member course," said Dave Love III, who was supposed to be in the clubhouse.

Alone in second place at 66 was Brett Wetterich, playing 10 minutes from his home in Jupiter. Jesper Parnevik, another Jupiter resident and the 2001 champion, shot 67 three days after turning 40. Both players benefited from mild afternoon weather.

The sky was clear all day, but winds exceeded 15 mph at the start, and with the grass still spongy from daylong rain Wednesday, the 7,468-yard course played up.

"Chad Campbell said he 'geared himself for a tough day.' "It was freezing," he said. "I got better, though. The first six or seven holes I was trying to be patient. Then I holed that shot at 17, which was my eighth hole, and kind of got things going."

Campbell played the final 11 holes in 8 under.

"That has to be one of the best rounds this year, because I was pleased with my 67," Parnevik said.

At 68 were Woody Austin, Nick Watney and Aaron Baddeley, who has finished in the top 10 in his past two starts. A group of 14 players at 69 included defending champion Todd Hamilton, Lee Janzen, Brad Faxon and 21-year-old Kevin Na, the youngest player on the tour.

Vijay Singh, playing his first round since he fell to 2 in the world rankings, shot 71. Singh, the only player among the top six in the world entered in this event, cannot regain the No. 1 ranking this week.

Elis still seven back at Qatar

DOHA, Qatar — Richard Green of Australia shot 4-under 68 Friday to take a one-stroke lead over Sweden's Perle Folke and Robert Karlsson after the second round of the Qatar Masters.

Ernie Els, the 2002 winner, is in the field, bounced back with a 69 after an opening 73 but remained seven strokes off the lead.

Five-time winner withdraws from Iditarod

By RACHEL D'ORO

The Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Rick Swenson, the only five-time winner of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, dropped out of the running Thursday — the first time he's abandoned the 1,100-mile trek to Nome in 29 years on the trail.

The 54-year-old musher from Two Rivers, Alaska, officially withdrew after returning to the checkpoint at McGrath, 722 miles from the finish line. Swenson told race managers he was concerned about the well-being of his dogs.

"He said they weren't running as well as he wanted them to," race marshal Mark Nordman said.

Norwegian Robert Sorlie was the first musher to arrive early Thursday at the checkpoint in the ghost town of Iditarod — considered the halfway point.

For getting there first, the 47-year-old firefighter received \$4,000 in first mugs. Sorlie, of Hurda, also was the first musher to reach the halfway point when he won the race in 2003 in 9 days, 15 hours and 47 minutes.

Sorlie's hold on the lead was tenuous because other top mushers have already satisfied the mandatory 24-hour rest period. That could shake up the standings over the next



Rachael Scioris, a 20-year-old from Bend, Ore., is trying to become the first blind musher to complete the 1,100-mile Iditarod. She was near the back of the pack on Thursday.

day. Mushers are also required to take two eight-hour layovers.

Sorlie and other leaders — including four-winner Martin Buser of Big Lake, defending champion Mike Seavey of Seward and three-time winner Jeff King of Denali Park — were expected to take their 24-hour rests at the Iditarod checkpoint, 590 miles from Nome.

Sorlie would not be able to leave Iditarod

until early Friday morning, freeing up the trail for mushers who have gotten their 24-hour rests out of the way.

They include Alty Zirkle of Two Rivers, a former winner of the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race, 2005 Quest winner Lance Mackey of Kasloil and four-time Iditarod winner Doug Swingley of Lincoln, Mont. Swenson took his required 24-hour rest at McGrath, then traveled 18 miles to the Takotna checkpoint, arriving shortly before 7 a.m. Thursday, race officials said. He dropped off one of his dogs, then headed for Ophir — 25 miles away — with 12 dogs.

Mushers start the race with 16 dogs and must end it with at least five.

On the trail, Swenson decided to turn back to McGrath, a busy hub where he could transport his dogs home quicker, Iditarod spokesman Chas St. George said.

"He's the kind of guy who hates to quit, so his decision was based on what's in the best interest of his team," he said.

Another top musher withdrew from competition late Wednesday.

Zack Steer of Sheep Mountain was in eighth place when he scratched at the Ophir checkpoint, about 475 miles into the race. Steer, whose pregnant wife is due later this month, cited personal reasons for dropping out.

Favre retraining for 2005 season

Packers QB tells coach of decision, based on wife's improving health

BY ARNIE STAPLETON

The Associated Press

For months, Green Bay Packers fans have worried about Brett Favre's future, wondering whether the three-time MVP was going to return or retire.

They got delightful news Thursday when coach Mike Sherman told The Associated Press that Favre will play in 2005 — and maybe beyond — because his wife's recovery from breast cancer is going so well.

As word spread across the NFL, Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle chimed in, issuing a statement of gratitude.

"Like all all Packers fans, I am thrilled that Brett Favre will be returning to action next season for the green and gold," Doyle said. "He is probably the greatest quarterback of all time, and as long as he's around, the Packers will always be contenders."

"On behalf of Packers fans everywhere, I thank Brett Favre today for giving us one more reason to cheer."

Sherman said he had a two-hour conversation with his quarterback on Wednesday night. Favre informed him his wife is doing well in her cancer treatment, so he's planning to play at least one more season, maybe more if his health holds up.

Favre said after the Packers' playoff loss to Minnesota in January he wanted to reflect before committing to playing a 15th NFL season following a year of personal turmoil.

His wife, Deanna, was diagnosed with her illness in October, a week after the death of her 24-year-old brother in an ATV accident on the quarterback's property in Mississippi.

And Favre was still dealing with the stunning news of Reggie White's death on the day after Christmas, which came about a year after the death of Favre's father, Irv, from a heart attack.

"After the season, he just needed to think about some things," Sherman said.

"Any man would have to contemplate his future when his wife



In 2004, Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre passed for more than 4,000 yards and recorded his eighth 30-touchdown season.

is fighting cancer. It's not like he had to work to make money. He didn't want to be a part-time husband and a part-time football player. It came down to his wife. If she's not healthy, it's obviously a different ballgame. But now she's doing good. She wants him to play."

It never was a question of diminished ability because, even at 35, Favre is still near the top of his game.

He exceeded 4,000 yards passing last season and had his eighth 30-touchdown season, twice as many as any quarterback in NFL history, and the Packers set franchise records for total offense and net yards passing in 2004.

"He's always been excited about playing football," Sherman said. "He's never lost his enthusiasm for the game. It's just his family situation was pulling at him."

Deanna Favre has completed her chemotherapy and is undergoing radiation treatment. "The Favres are helping put on a Faith Hill concert back home Saturday night to benefit breast cancer patients. Favre is scheduled to appear at the Packers' inaugural fan fest that morning in Green Bay, where he's sure to get a rousing welcome for his decision to stick around."

"As long as he can play at a Brett Favre level, he will," Sherman said, "unless some situation of the field, outside of football, affects him or his family."

Jets sign QB Fiedler to back up Pennington

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The New York Jets signed Jay Fiedler on Friday, giving the quarterback can provide experience and depth behind Chad Pennington.

Fiedler, who will be entering his 10th season, visited the team at its Hempstead complex Thursday and the sides started negotiating. He received a five-year deal with \$1.3 million guaranteed, including a \$500,000 signing bonus, according to his agent, Brian Levy.

Pennington is recovering from surgery on his right rotator cuff, and the Jets had no intention of bringing back Quincy Carter. Brooks Bollinger was the No. 3 quarterback last season, but is entering his third year in the league and needs more seasoning.

Fiedler, 33, spent the last five seasons with the Miami Dolphins and took considerable criticism as the successor to Dan Marino.

In five seasons with the Dolphins, Fiedler was 26-22 as a starter, throwing for 11,040 yards and 66 touchdowns, with 63 interceptions.

On Thursday, the New York Giants said in a news release that they pulled back their offer to free agent wide receiver Plaxico Burress, an announcement almost never made in the NFL.

Burress' agent said the player had rejected the team.

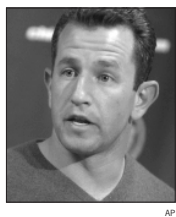


"The Giants made us an offer, we rejected, they upped their offer, we rejected it again, and that's when they said they had to rescind the deal," Michael Harrison told The Associated Press, saying Burress would next visit Minnesota.

■ Dwyer matched the New York Jets' offer sheet to tight end Jed Putzler, a restricted free agent. Putzler, who averaged 15.9 yards per catch last year on 36 receptions, will get \$12.5 million over five years, with a \$2.5 million signing bonus.

■ The Green Bay Packers released two-time Pro Bowl safety Darren Sharper to trim \$3.4 million off their salary cap and avoid having to pay him a \$2.6 million roster bonus this weekend. The team tried to get Sharper to restructure his deal, but he balked at a pay cut, hoping he can make more on the open market than the approximately \$2 million Green Bay was offering for 2005.

■ The Raiders re-signed guard Ron Stone just a week after waiving him in a salary cap maneuver. Stone, a three-time Pro Bowler, started only five games for the Raiders last season while slowed by an injured left knee.



Former Miami Dolphins QB Jay Fiedler, above, signed a five-year deal Friday to back up Chad Pennington for the New York Jets.

■ Veteran kicker Joe Nedney, who missed nearly all the last two seasons with injuries, signed with San Francisco.

■ Philadelphia safety/kick returner J.R. Reed may not be ready for training camp after injuring his leg in a freak accident last month. Reed cut the back of his knee while jumping over a fence near his home in Tampa, Fla., and damaged a nerve that affects the use of his lower leg and foot.

He had surgery March 1, and his status is uncertain.

■ Carolina signed safety Marlon McCree, who played last season for Houston. He will back up Mike Minter and Colin Branch.

■ Brad Johnson, who quarterbacked Tampa Bay to the 2002 NFL championship, worked out for the Bears.

Roush drivers on top, bottom as Nxtel Cup rolls into Vegas

BY JENNA FRYER

The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Kurt Busch is back in his hometown with a championship trophy and the Nxtel Cup points lead. What's he learned is that neither gets him very far.

"Vegas is a celebrity-driven city, so it takes a lot of people to get excited," he said. "But the times I have been back, there have been some spells and it's nice to be able to enjoy them, and for my friends and family to get some of that special treatment."

A victory at Las Vegas Motor Speedway would certainly get him a little more red-carpet treatment, and add Busch's name to the list of Roush Racing drivers who have won the UAW-DaimlerChrysler 400.

Roush drivers have won five of the seven Nxtel Cup races here, but series champion Busch isn't one of them. His ninth-place finish last season is his only Top 10 in four career starts here.

It could be the pressure. "Every time we go to Las Vegas it's like my own Daytona 500 with all of the media and family and

Report: Tice says he sold his tickets to Super Bowl

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota Vikings coach Mike Tice acknowledged scalping some of his personal Super Bowl ticket allotment last month in violation of NFL rules, according to a published report.

"I probably shouldn't have sold my tickets," Tice told SL.com in a report posted on the Web site Thursday night. "I made a mistake. I regret it. I'll never do it again. I'm going to be in trouble. I'll probably get slapped with a big fine."

The revelation came two days after SL.com first reported that Tice was being investigated for allegedly heading up a ticket-scalping operation within the Vikings organization.

Tice did not immediately return a phone message left late Thursday by The Associated Press.

The NFL acknowledged Wednesday that it is looking into allegations that Tice scalped Super Bowl tickets. Tice later confirmed to the AP that he had met with league security officials, but declined to elaborate.

Tice had been under NFL security investigators that he scalped part of his allotment of 12 tickets to this year's Super Bowl.

friends and the sheer excitement of the city and being back at home," Busch said.

But crew chief Jimmy Fennig is determined to help his driver leave a winner.

"This race means a lot to Kurt and the whole team is excited about going back out to Vegas," Fennig said. "We've never run as well here as we've wanted to, and we came out here to test last month and learned a few things that hopefully can pay off for us this weekend."

Busch's toughest competition could come from his own camp, with teammate Matt Kenseth will be looking for a trifecta. The 2003 series champion has won the past two Las Vegas races.

Kenseth isn't feeling too confident about another Sunday. "Just because you've had success in the past definitely doesn't guarantee it for this time or the next time," Kenseth said.

Luck has definitely not been on Kenseth's side this season. Known for consistency and a knack for being near the front of the pack for 71 consecutive races, Kenseth has instead found himself way back in the field in the season's first two events.

A blown motor led to a next-to-last-place finish in the season-opening Daytona 500, and he was 26th at California.

Now Kenseth, in the top 10 in points for 71 consecutive weeks at the start of this season, is 36th in the standings.



Kurt Busch



After watching her race in the Toyota Atlantic series for the past two years, Bobby Rahal brought 22-year-old Danica Patrick, above, up to IRL as a teammate to Indianapolis 500 champion Buddy Rice and Vitor Meira. Patrick suffered a concussion in the opener, but should be ready for the IRL's next race on March 19.

Danica's dream

Team Rahal's Patrick, only female driver in IRL in '05, out to prove she's a winner

BY MIKE HARRIS
The Associated Press

HOMESTEAD, Fla. — Danica Patrick gazed at an artsy media guide photo of fellow IRL driver Tomas Scheckter with his shirt off, and chuckled.

"I have no problem with that," said Patrick, who has done some provocative — but clothed — posing of her own in men's magazine FHM. "This is just the kind of stuff that you have to do to help promote the sport. And then they let us race."

Racing is without question the most important thing for the petite 22-year-old, the only woman competing in the IRL's IndyCar Series this year.

It's a big step for Patrick, moving up to Team Rahal as teammate to Indianapolis 500 champion Buddy Rice and Vitor Meira. She spent the last two years in the Toyota Atlantic series, where she was a pole and ran competitively but didn't win a race.

Team owner Bobby Rahal, a former Indy winner and three-time champion in the CART series, said it was the right time for the promotion.

"My view was that another year of Formula Atlantic would have done nothing for her," Rahal said. "Then, you start looking around, and what else is there?"

"I think any good driver, if they have talent, they come to grips very quickly with whatever they're about to get into," he added. "I felt with enough testing and the right sort of continuing tutelage of her that she could be successful this year in this category."

The boss has tried hard not to put too much pressure on Patrick.

"I told her the other day, 'I could care less where you finish this weekend. What I care about is that you finish a race.'"

"The biggest thing for her is to get as much experience as quickly as possible," he said. "That's only

going to come from running the whole races, understanding how the car changes, understanding the ebb and the flow of the race itself. This race is minimally twice as long as any race she's ever driven."

Unfortunately, the 2004 opener last Sunday at Homestead-Miami Speedway was about 42 laps too long for Patrick, who was running in 10th place and looking more and more comfortable as the day wore on before becoming an innocent victim in a frightening eight-car crash on lap 159.

She came away with a concussion but is expected to be ready for the next race, March 19 at Phoenix International Raceway.

The slim woman with long black hair may look more like an aspiring gymnast than a race car driver, but the confidence she has built in a career that began in karting at the age of 6 is unwavering.

"I am confident, I really am," Patrick said. "The guys on the team say, 'You deserve to be here. You've worked a long time and you've worked hard.' Bobby's like, 'I'm not putting you out there because you're a charity case. You deserve it.'"

"After somebody tells you that so many times, you've got to believe them. As much as sometimes we doubt or get frustrated with

ourselves, you've got to think, 'I'm here because people think I can go out there and win races.' I fully believe them. There's nothing I don't think I could do."

Patrick's main goal now is to become the first woman to win an IndyCar race.

"I am on a one-way track to victory," she said. "Whether it takes one week or one year, I don't care."

I'm just going to focus and know that I'm here because I'm good and that experience takes time."

Patrick, who is engaged to a physical therapist and plans to be married in November, isn't only a race car driver, though. She enjoys cooking, yoga and "a lot of girl stuff."

Cup rookie Busch ignoring pressure

BY MIKE HARRIS
The Associated Press

Kyle Busch has a lot to prove — to himself.

He gets a little embarrassed when reminded that his older brother, reigning NASCAR Nextel Cup champion Kurt Busch, gives him credit as the better driver of the two.

"It's definitely cool that a Nextel Cup champion tells you that or says that to the media, but I just have to go out and prove it," said the 19-year-old, who will race in Sunday's UAW-DaimlerChrysler 400 at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, his hometown track.

The teenager won his first Cup pole two weeks ago in California — becoming the youngest to do that. But Busch has yet to show the kind of racing prowess in NASCAR's top series that brother Kurt demonstrated and has forecast for his younger sibling.

In six Cup races last year, Kyle managed to finish higher than 24th. His two starts so far in his official rookie season have produced finishes of 38th at Daytona and 23rd in California.

Nobody should get too down on the kid, though. He's definitely got the makings of a very big star.

In 2001 — his junior year in high school — the Vegas native drove in six NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series races for Roush Racing and had a pair of top 10 finishes.

He was sidelined briefly — and Hendrick Motorsports subsequently took advantage of a contract glitch to steal him away from Roush — when NASCAR made a rule limiting participation to drivers at least 18. But Kyle's ascent was slowed only momentarily.

He finished eighth in the American Speed Association in 2002, then won two ARCA stock car races and made seven Busch Series starts for Hendrick in 2003, showing his promise by finishing second in his debut at Charlotte.

Last year, the younger Busch finally got the chance to run a full NASCAR season and took full advantage, winning five races and finishing as the Busch Series runner-up to Martin Truex Jr.

Now, he is a full-time Cup driver, taking over the Chevrolet vacated by two-time series champi-

on Terry Labonte, who has backed off to a limited schedule this year.

"I think he's going to do well," Labonte said. "He was a little nervous about it because the Cup races he ran last year didn't go as well as his Busch deal was going."

"I told him that this is a whole different deal. You're going to be with a real team, a legitimate team. Last year, he ran with a group that was just kind of put together and had no chemistry."

Kurt Busch rose through the ranks nearly as quickly as his younger brother, arriving in Cup racing in 2001 at the age of 22 after winning the NASCAR Southwest Tour title in 1999 and finishing second for Roush Racing in Craftsman Trucks the next year.

The elder brother finished 27th with no wins and three top-five finishes as a Cup rookie before establishing himself as a race star the next season with four wins and a third-place finish.

Kyle knows he has big foot-steps to follow.

"The reason I'm here, obviously, is because of my brother," the younger Busch said. "He opened a lot of doors for me."

"There's probably doubt in everybody's mind that I belong here," he added. "But, in my own mind, I believe I belong here. I've worked my whole life to get here even though it's only been 19 years."

His slow start hasn't been easy to take for a driver accustomed to quick success.

"I'm pretty much my own worst critic, which is kind of bad to be," Kyle said. "Still, I look forward to going out there and facing the challenges that arise and working with my new crew chief. It's going to take some time to develop the chemistry there."

At an age when a lot of guys are attending college and trying to figure out where they are headed in life, Kyle Busch is pretty sure he is where he's supposed to be.

"I hung out with the smart kids in high school so I could learn as quick as I could and get out of school," he said. "They're probably off being computer wizards or something like that."

"I always got made fun of in school because I was racing and I really didn't have a future ahead of me," he added. "I guess I kind of proved them wrong."



Kyle Busch, above, is under a lot of pressure as the brother of Nextel Cup champ Kurt Busch, but he's already won a pole this season.

Bufs' hot second-half shooting burns Longhorns

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Whatever happens from here, Colorado can at least claim a Big 12 tournament history.

Until Thursday night, a No. 11 seed had never won an opening-round game since the Big 12 opened play in the 1996-97 season. That all changed, though, when the Buffaloes overcame horrible first-half shooting performance to upset Texas 81-69.

"We just felt that we were better than our record indicated," said freshman Rich and Roby, who led Colorado (14-15) with 17 points and 10 rebounds. "We felt we

Big 12

could win. We didn't want our season to end today."

The Buffaloes shot just 13-for-36 in the first half but were 14-of-27 after

the break.

The sixth-seeded Longhorns (20-10) struggled with their shots throughout, making just 36 percent of their field goals for the game (20 of 58).

"We have to play smarter," said Daniel Gibson, the Big 12 freshman of the year, who was 2-of-6 from three-point range and finished with 11 points. "We were shooting threes when we knew they

couldn't handle the big guys inside."

The Longhorns, who were nine of 35 from three-point range, led 49-46 with just over 13 minutes left before the Buffaloes went on a 15-1 run.

Texas pulled within 65-60 on Kenton Paulino's three-pointer with 7:20 remaining, but the Buffaloes responded with seven straight points to go to 72-60 with just over 4½ minutes left.

In other Big 12 games, Thursday:

Iowa St. 77, Baylor 57: Rahshon Clark scored a career-high 20 points and Jared Homan added 17 for the fifth-seeded Cyclones (18-10), who led 17-0 and won for

the 10th time in 12 games.

After falling behind by 20 in the opening minutes, the Bears (9-19) never got closer than 12 points.

Kansas St. 68, Texas A&M 62: Jeremiah Massey scored six of his 18 points in a decisive 14-4 second-half run that propelled the Cornhuskers (17-13) to their first tournament win since 2002.

Antoine Wright had 28 points for the Aggies (19-9), winless in the tournament since the inception of the Big 12.

Missouri 70, Nebraska 67: Linas Kleiza scored 26 points as the Tigers (16-15) defeated the Cornhuskers (14-14) for the third time this season.

Conference tournaments

America East

Championship
Saturday
Northeastern at Vermont

Atlantic Coast

Thursday
Clemson 84, Maryland 72
North Carolina 57, Florida 54
Virginia Tech 66, Miami 65

Friday
North Carolina 81, Clemson 81
Virginia Tech vs. Georgia Tech
Wake Forest vs. N.C. State
Duke vs. Virginia

Saturday
N. Carolina vs. Va. Tech
Duke vs. Virginia Tech
Championship
Sunday

Atlantic 10

Thursday
Saint Joseph's 63, Richmond 51
Xavier 67, La Salle 77
George Washington 73, Fordham 63
Dayton 55, Dayton 55

Friday
Saint Joseph's vs. Xavier
George Washington vs. Temple
Championship
Saturday

Big East

Thursday
West Virginia 78, Boston College 72
Villanova 62, Pittsburgh 62
Connecticut 66, Georgetown 62
Syracuse 83, Rutgers 57

Friday
West Virginia vs. Villanova
Connecticut vs. Syracuse
Championship
Saturday

Big Ten

Thursday
Northwestern 58, Michigan 56
Iowa 71, Purdue 52
Ohio State 72, Penn State 69

Friday
Illinois 68, Northwestern 51
Minnesota vs. Indiana
Michigan State vs. Iowa
Wisconsin vs. Ohio State
Saturday

Sunday
Illinois vs. Minnesota/Indiana
Michigan St./Iowa vs. Wisconsin/Ohio St.
Championship

Big 12

Thursday
Missouri 70, Nebraska 67
Iowa St. 77, Baylor 57
Kansas State 68, Texas A&M 62
Colorado 81, Texas 69

Friday
Oklahoma vs. Missouri
Texas Tech vs. Iowa State
Kansas vs. Kansas State
Michigan St./Iowa vs. Wisconsin/Ohio St.
Saturday

Sunday
Oklahoma/Missouri vs. Texas Tech/Iowa St.
Kansas/Kansas St. vs. Okla. St./Colorado
Championship

Big West

Thursday
California Fullerton 64, Santa Barbara 56
Cal State Northridge 65, UC Irvine 55
Pacific at Cal State Fullerton
Utah State vs. Cal State Fullerton
Saturday

Sunday
Championship

Conference USA

Thursday
Louisville 85, Charlotte 61
Ola, Mississippi 69, DePaul 56
Memphis 83, Cincinnati 68

Friday
Louisville vs. Alabama/Birmingham
Memphis vs. South Florida
Championship
Saturday

Western Athletic

Thursday
Idaho 85, Pacific 60, Hawaii 62
Rice 63, Southern Methodist 47
Fresno State 64, Louisiana Tech 81, UT
State 73, Nevada 72

Friday
Idaho vs. Pacific vs. Rice
Fresno State vs. Boise State
Championship
Saturday

Mid-American

Thursday
Buffalo 85, Toledo 70
W. Michigan 66, Akron 60, OT
Miami (Ohio) 65, Bowling Green 65
OT 62, Kent State 55

Friday
Miami (Ohio) vs. Ohio
Buffalo vs. Western Michigan
Championship
Saturday

Mid-Eastern Athletic

Thursday
South Carolina State 78, Norfolk State 59
Coppin State 60, Morgan State 43

Friday
Delaware State vs. South Carolina State
Hampton vs. Coppin State
Championship
Saturday

Mountain West

Thursday
Utah 62, Colorado 49
UNLV 70, Wyoming 61
New Mexico 85, Brigham Young 71
San Diego State 73, Air Force 68

Friday
Utah vs. UNLV
New Mexico vs. San Diego State
Championship
Saturday

Pacific-10

Thursday
Arizona 88, California 83
Oregon State 59, UCLA 72
Washington 85, Arizona 66, OT
Stanford 60, Washington State 58

Friday
Arizona vs. Oregon State
Washington vs. Stanford
Championship
Saturday

Patriot

Championship
Friday
Bucknell at Holy Cross

Southeastern

Thursday
Mississippi 51, South Carolina 52
Mississippi State 76, Georgia 65
Tennessee 66, Arkansas 46
Auburn 77, Vanderbilt 70

Friday
Alabama vs. Mississippi
Florida vs. Tennessee
Kentucky vs. Tennessee
LSU vs. Auburn
Saturday

Sunday
Alabama/Mississippi vs. Florida/Miss. St.
Kentucky/Tennessee vs. LSU/Auburn
Championship

Southeastern

Thursday
Northwestern State 78, Southern 75
SE Louisiana 71, San Houston State 62
SE Louisiana at Northwestern State

Southwestern Athletic

Thursday
Jackson St. 57, Mississippi Valley 55
Southern 69, Grambling 65, OT
Alabama State 64, Prairie View A&M 56
Alabama A&M 64, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 52

Friday
Southern vs. Alabama State
Jackson State vs. Alabama A&M
Championship
Saturday

Western Athletic

Thursday
Idaho 85, Pacific 60, Hawaii 62
Rice 63, Southern Methodist 47
Fresno State 64, Louisiana Tech 81, UT
State 73, Nevada 72

Friday
Idaho vs. Pacific vs. Rice
Fresno State vs. Boise State
Championship
Saturday

Air Force upset in MWC

The Associated Press

DENVER — Brandon Heath scored 28 points and Marcus Slaughter added 24, helping Air Force State knock off No. 3 seed Air Force 73-68 Thursday night in the first round of the Mountain West Conference tournament.

San Diego State (11-17) led by 13 in the second half before Air Force (18-12) used defensive pressure and timely outside shots to cut it into its deficit.

The Falcons trailed 65-62 after Matt McCraw's three-point shot with 58 seconds left and got a break when the Aztecs' Matt Thomas missed two free throws. But Air Force couldn't get the rebound and Jacob Butcher was assessed a technical foul for arguing a call. San Diego State then made four free throws to secure its second first-round tournament victory in five years.

The Falcons, who reached the NCAA tournament last year for the first time since 1962, lost their 13th consecutive tournament game.

Antoine Hood had 17 points for Air Force, which committed 15 turnovers.

In other MWC tournament games Thursday:

New Mexico 85, BYU 71: Led by 23 points from Danny Granger and a career-high 12 assists from Mark Walters, the Lob 24-6 beefed up their résumé against overmatched BYU (9-21).

UNLV 70, Wyoming 63: Michael Umeh scored 20 of his 21 points in the first half and Ricky Morgan hit 14 straight free throws in the final five minutes to lift the Rebels (16-12) over the Cowboys (15-13).

No. 15 Utah 62, Colorado 52: Andrew Bogut had 21 points and 17 rebounds as the Utes (26-4) cruised past the Rams (11-17).

Pac-10

No. 14 Washington 95, Arizona State 90 (OT): At Los Angeles, Nate Robinson scored six of his 29 points in overtime to boost the second-seeded Huskies (25-5). Pac-10 player of the year Leke Diogu had 21 points, 13 rebounds and a tournament-record five blocks for Arizona State (18-13).

Oregon St. 79, UCLA 72:

Conference tourneys

Chris Stephens scored 17 points and Nick DeWitz added 15 points to help the fifth-seeded Beavers (17-13) win for the first time this season away from home. The fourth-seeded Bruins (18-10) were led by Dylon Thompson's 18 points.

Stanford 60, Washington St. 58: Rob Little scored his second basket of the game with 17 seconds to break a tie and help No. 3 seed Stanford (18-11) beat the Cougars (12-16) for the first time this season.

Southeastern

Auburn 77, Vanderbilt 73: At Atlanta, Tony Douglas scored 21 points as the Tigers (14-16) held on to beat the Commodores (18-14) despite losing nearly all of a 21-point second-half lead.

Tennessee 65, Arkansas 46: Scooter McFadden scored 22 points and the Volunteers (14-16) took control in the first half with a 21-2 run. The Razorbacks (18-12) trailed by 10 at halftime and never threatened to make it close.

Mississippi St. 76, Georgia 65: Shane Power scored 15 points and the Bulldogs (22-9) ran into a victory over Georgia (8-20).

Mississippi 53, South Carolina 52: Tommie Ediss scored 17 points and the Rebels (14-16) won after officials overturned a tying three-pointer by the Gamecocks (15-13), determining via replay that Tre Kelly had his foot on the three-point line when he made the final basket of the game.

Atlantic 10

Temple 61, Dayton 51: At Cincinnati, Despite coach John Chaney's suspension, the Flyers (16-12) used intimidating defense to thwart the Flyers, who shot 34.5 percent from the field and went more than 11 minutes without scoring in the first half.

Saint Joseph's 63, Richmond 51: Dave Mallon scored a career-high 17 points and conference co-player of the year Pat Carroll added 16 points for the top-seeded Hawks (18-10).

George Washington 79,

Fordham 63: Pops Mensah-Bonsu scored 21 points and Mike Hall added 18 as the Colonials (20-7) beat the Rams (13-16) for the sixth consecutive time.

Xavier 83, La Salle 70: Stanley Burrell and Justin Gage had 16 points apiece for the Musketeers (17-11) against La Salle (10-19).

Western Athletic Conf.

Boise St. 73, No. 24 Nevada 72: At Reno, Nev., Jermaine Blackburn scored on a rebound off a missed free throw with 1.8 seconds left as the eighth-seeded Broncos (15-17) snapped Nevada's 10-game winning streak.

Nick Papezakis scored 16 of his 18 points in the second half for top-seeded Wolf Pack (24-6).

Fresno St. 84, Louisiana Tech 81 (OT): JaVance Coleman scored seven of his 24 points in overtime to lift the fourth-seeded Bulldogs (16-13) over fifth-seeded Louisiana Tech (14-15).

Rice 63, SMU 47: Michael Harris scored 25 points and J.R. Harrison added 11 for the third-seeded Owls (19-10). SMU is 14-14.

UTEP 80, Hawaii 62: Omar Thomas scored 21 points and Filiber to Rivera added 19 to help UTEP (25-7) roll past seventh-seeded Hawaii (16-13).

Mid-American

Miami (Ohio) 85, Bowling Green 65: At Cleveland, Danny Horace scored a career-high 28 points, Chris Matson added 21 and top-seeded Miami (Ohio) (19-9) avenged last week's loss to the eighth-seeded Falcons (18-11).

Ohio 62, Kent State 55: Conference freshman of the year Leon Williams scored 14 points and added 16 rebounds to lead the fourth-seeded Bobcats (19-10) over fifth-seeded Golden Flashes (20-12).

Buffalo 83, Toledo 72: Calvin Cade scored 23 points to help the seventh-seeded Bulls (21-8) avenge a loss to the Rockets (16-13) in last year's quarterfinals.

W. Michigan 66, Akron 60 (OT): Ben Reed scored 24 points and the third-seeded Broncos (19-11) scored 18 points on free throws in overtime to eliminate the defending tournament champion Zips (19-10).

Big East beast?

Surprising West Virginia knocks off top seed; No. 19 Villanova next in line for Mountaineers

BY DENNIS WASZAK JR.
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With chants of "ACC! ACC!" and "Over-rated," the Big East tournament crowd sarcastically wished Boston College a not-so-fond farewell.

The top-seeded Eagles, who are moving to the Atlantic Coast Conference next season, couldn't overcome a 25-point deficit and dropped a 78-72 decision to upstart West Virginia in the quarterfinals Thursday.

"I think people are down after losing this game right here," Eagles forward Jared Dudley said. "High hopes, high expectations for us to come in this tournament, make it to the championship game and win it. So, you know, with this loss, it's a setback."

"But that's all it is. We're going to bounce back."

The seventh-ranked Eagles (24-4) better hope so, and fast. They shared the regular-season title with Connecticut, but sputtered through their last eight games, going just 4-4.

"Guys have to take a little pride in themselves and with their team and go out and work harder," Boston College coach Al Skinner said. "It's just that simple. Our preparation, our focus has got to be there. Right now, it's lacking."

The same couldn't be said of West Virginia (20-9), which very likely wrapped up at least an NCAA tournament at-large bid by impressing the selection committee with the surprising victory over the Big East's top seed.

"Obviously, I'm biased, but they will choose the right teams and there's no doubt in our minds that we're one of the right teams," West Virginia coach John Beilein said.

Mike Gansey scored 21 points and Kevin Pittsnogle added 17 for the eight-seeded Mountaineers.

"It's a great feeling to come in here, play against a good team and prove that we're a good team," Pittsnogle said. "We're having a lot of fun."

Making the win even more impressive for the Mountaineers was that they did it without

top scorer Tyrone Sally, who missed the game with a stomach ailment.

Craig Smith scored 20 points and grabbed eight rebounds for Boston College.

Gansey's three-point play 19 seconds into the second half gave West Virginia a 47-22 lead. Boston College went on runs of 10-0 and 11-5 and pulled to 62-58 with 4:41 left before the Mountaineers regained control.

No. 19 Villanova 67, No. 22 Pittsburgh 58: Randy Foye scored 23 points and Villanova (22-6) won its eighth straight, advancing to the semifinals for the second straight year.

"We played great team defense," Villanova coach Jay Wright said. "We knew Pittsburgh would be tough and they were. This was an old-school Big East game, a bloodbath."

The loss ended a four-year run of championship game appearances for Pittsburgh (20-8).

No. 12 Connecticut 66, Georgetown 62: Freshman Rudy Gay had 17 points for Connecticut, which hung on despite getting only one basket in the final five minutes.

The second-seeded and 12th-ranked Huskies (22-6) have been in the last three championship games, winning the title in 2002 and 2004, and have reached the semifinals seven of the last eight years.

The Huskies had to sweat this one out as they won their seventh straight and 10th of 11.

"I think we played one of our poorer games and a lot of that was caused by Georgetown," Huskies coach Jim Calhoun said.

Ashanti Cook had 17 points for the Hoyas (17-12).

No. 16 Syracuse 81, Rutgers 57: Gerry McNamara scored 25 points and Hakim Warrick added 25 points and 13 rebounds to lead third-seeded and 16th-ranked Syracuse (25-6) into the semifinals against Connecticut. The Huskies swept the Orange this season, including an 88-70 victory last Saturday to wrap up the regular season.

"They got us the last two games, so we definitely know what to expect," Warrick said of Connecticut.

Quincy Douby had 14 points to lead Rutgers (10-19), which was trying to reach the semifinals for just the second time in school history.



Hakim Warrick soars for a dunk in Syracuse's 81-57 romp over Rutgers on Thursday night.

Louisville and upsets highlight C-USA play

The Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Larry O'Bannon scored 18 points to lead five Louisville players in double figures, and the six-ranked Cardinals beat TCU 85-61 in the quarterfinals of the Conference USA tournament.

The top-seeded Cardinals (27-4) led throughout in winning their seventh straight game and 16th in the last 17.

TCU (19-13) stayed close for the first 11 minutes before Louisville blew out the Horned Frogs, as happened in four of the previous five meetings.

Francisco Garcia had 15 points for Louisville, Taquan Dean finished with 12 and Otis George added 11. Ellis Myrland had 10 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists.

South Florida 80, No. 21 Cincinnati 68: Terrence Leather scored 16 of his 21 points in the second half to lead South Florida's upset of the Bearcats.

The 11th-seeded Bulls (14-15) haven't won three straight games, reached the tournament semifinals for the first time in their last season as a member. The Bulls will be playing in the Big East next season, along with Louisville and Cincinnati (24-7).

Brian Swift added 16 points for the Bulls, James Holmes and Marlyn Bryant each had 14.

Jason Maxie led Cincinnati with 21 points, Eric Hicks added 18 and James White had 10.

The Bearcats had won 14 straight over South Florida.

Memphis 83, No. 25 Charlotte 69: Rodney Carney scored 20 points as Memphis (18-14) continued its run through the conference tournament. Memphis, seeded seventh, won for the second straight night in a season-ending four-game skid. St. Louis, Memphis' first victim in the tournament, was one of the losses during that stretch, and Charlotte was another.

Memphis used strong rebounding to benefit from 35 percent by second-seeded Charlotte (21-7). Memphis outboarded the 49ers 45-33, including 22 offensive rebounds that led to 28 second-chance points.

Curtis Withers led the 49ers with 32 points, while C-USA play after the year Eddie Basden scored.

Ala.-Birmingham 59, DePaul 56: Demario Edkins hit a three-pointer from the left corner with 0.8 seconds left, rallying Alabama-Birmingham (21-9) into the second round.

Edkins' three-pointer from the top of the key had given the Blazers their first lead of the game at 56-53 with 18 remaining. He finished with 11 as did Donell Taylor. Marvett McDonald and Marques Lewis had 10 each for the fourth-seeded Blazers.

Quavon Greer led DePaul 5 seed DePaul (19-10) with 17 points and nine rebounds.

Big Ten salutes Keady as his Boilermakers fall

BY NANCY ARMOUR
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Maybe if the season hadn't been so dismal, the losses so frequent, Gene Keady would have felt differently as he walked off the court for the last time.

Instead, there was almost a sense of relief as he left to one more standing ovation. He spent 25 years stalking the sidelines at Purdue, scowling and looking as if he was having a miserable time, and he loved every bit of it.

It's time for something else now.

"It's kind of pleasant," he said Thursday after his career ended with Purdue's 71-52 loss to Iowa in the Big Ten tournament.

"I'm going to do what my wife has always wanted me to do: Stay home and do some work."

In other games on the tournament's opening day, Michigan (15-15) held off second-round berth opposite top-ranked Illinois

(29-1), and Ohio State (20-11) rallied past scrapy Penn State (72-69) and will now face No. 23 Wisconsin (20-7).

Thanks to its victory over Purdue, Iowa (20-10) advanced to face No. 13 Michigan State (22-5).

The 68-year-old Keady said last spring that he would return to Purdue for one last season. He helped pick his successor, Matt Painter, and hoped that would smooth the transition.

But nothing went smoothly at Purdue this year. Already down from several weak recruiting classes, the Boilermakers were hit hard by the injury bug. Leading scorer and rebounder Carl Landry blew out his knee and David Teague, second in scoring, was limited by a broken hand.

Purdue finished 7-21, only the third time Keady has had a losing record at the school. The Boilermakers didn't win a game away from Macksy Arena since 1981. Purdue was just 3-13 in Big Ten play, the worst showing of Keady's career.

"If we'd been winning and had a great year, and everything was going like it was supposed to, it might have been different, but not when you get beat," Keady said when asked if he was sad about leaving. "I just don't like the way things are. It's kind of like a mercy killing. 'Pull the plug, boys, and let's get out of here.' It's no fun."

His last game was no different. Purdue was 19 of it almost from the start, done in by the Hawkeyes' barrage of three-pointers. Less than six minutes into the game, the Boilermakers were down 12-2 and could not recover.

Keady looked as if he was in physical pain as he sat on the bench, squirming in his seat, scowling at errant passes, winging at free shots. He ran his hand up to that infamous convolver countless times, and leaned back, exhaling in disgust.

"I just feel for him that his last year was 19 of it almost from the start," said Iowa coach Steve Alford, who played against Keady when he was at Indiana. "I hope wate-

er it is, it's his wishes and it's what he wants to do. I know he can walk away right now and feel very satisfied he's had a phenomenal career."

Keady leaves with a career record of 550-289 that includes six Big Ten titles and 17 NCAA tournament appearances. In a time when coaches come and go more quickly than players, he's a special breed: a coach with staying power. Syracuse's Jim Boeheim and Sacred Heart's Dave Burke are the only active Division I coaches to have stayed longer at one school. Mike Krzyzewski is in his 25th season at Duke.

He's also the last of the Big Ten's old guard, coaches who spent decades at one school and built intense rivalries in the process: Jud Heathcote at Michigan State, Lou Henson at Illinois, Tom Davis at Iowa, and, of course, the biggest rivalry of all, Bob Knight at Indiana.

"He has great ethics, great character, great integrity," Alford said. "He has done so much for our game at every level that he is going to be missed."

SPORTS

Schilling will appear at steroids hearing;
Canseco wants immunity for testimony,
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Looking out for No. 1

Arizona chasing one of top seeds in NCAA tournament

BY BETH HARRIS
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Arizona practically owns the Pac-10 tournament. This year, the No. 8 Wildcats want more than a trophy.

They're hopeful that a good showing will help them land a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament. Coach Lute Olson figures Illinois, Wake Forest and North Carolina have locked up the other top seeds, leaving the last one up for grabs.

"We want to get that No. 1 seed," Salim Stoudamire said after the Wildcats routed California 88-63 in Thursday's opening game of the conference tournament at Staples Center.

Arizona advanced to the semifinals for the sixth time in the event's eight-year history. The Wildcats have won a record four titles and their 14-3 tournament record is the best.

Friday's Pac-10 semifinals pair Arizona (26-5) and fifth-seeded Oregon State (17-13), while second-seeded Washington (25-5) takes on third-seeded Stanford (18-11).

Channing Frye scored 22 points on 10-for-11 shooting in Arizona's victory over Cal. The Wildcats shot 58 percent, second-highest of the season, while limiting the Golden Bears to 39 percent from the floor.

Arizona's 25-point winning margin was second-largest in tournament history, one point shy of the school's 93-67 victory over Oregon State in the 1988 title game.

"We made it difficult for Cal to score," Olson said. "We did a good job of getting good looks and knocking shots down."

Frye led four Wildcats in double figures, but Stoudamire wasn't one of them. He took just six shots, his fewest in two months, and his seven points was just the second time he didn't score double figures in his last 18 games.

Arizona built a 30-point lead in the second half, allowing Olson to rest his starters, who averaged 23.4 minutes. The bench logged 83 minutes, scoring 30 points and grabbing 13 rebounds.

The eighth-seeded Golden Bears (13-16) ended the season with seven losses in their final eight games. Cal has lost in the tournament's first round five times, including last year.

"Everyone is disappointed the way we finished the season," Cal's Richard Midgley said.

More conference tournaments inside:

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■ **Purdue's long season, Keady's career end with loss to Iowa**, **Page 31**

■ **W.Va. keeps BC from winning title in its last Big East season**, **Page 31**



University of Arizona's Channing Frye scored 22 points in the Wildcats' 88-63 victory over California in the Pac-10 tournament on Thursday in Los Angeles. Arizona shot 58 percent.



Favre tells Pack he'll be back for at least one more season

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Jets sign former Dolphins QB Fiedler to back up Pennington

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Miller clinches super-G title, inches closer to winning overall World Cup crown

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Texas first team to lose to No. 11 seed in Big 12 tourney Page 30